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POEMS.

POEMS.

BY

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

LONDON:
O. RICH & SONS, 12, RED LION SQUARE.

MDCCCXLVI.

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BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS

NOTE BY THE ENGLISH PUBLISHER.

This volume contains all of Dr. Holmes's Poems published in the last Boston edition. Those which follow "The Hot Season," on page 141, are here collected for the first time from Magazines and other sources, available to the English Editor; who has also added a short Memoir of the Author from Griswold's "Poets and Poetry of America."

PREFACE

TO THE FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.

As the poem which stands at the head of this collection was received kindly enough to warrant its publication, I have availed myself of this occasion as an apology for offering a little book to the public. Among the poems which it contains are several, which the wishes of others rather than my own have led me to admit. Besides, having written comparatively little, and nothing of late years, until within a few months, I could ill afford to be over nice in my selection, unless I were willing to reduce my volume to dimensions odious alike to the self-love of authors and the cupidity of booksellers. If the good-natured reader, then, should find some pages a little over dull, or over extravagant, let him take it for

granted that they were reluctantly admitted by the author, in consideration of the exigencies of the publisher.

The first poem in the collection being somewhat discursive, I will point out, in a few words, its scope and connexion. Its object is to express some general truths on the sources and the machinery of Poetry; to sketch some changes which may be supposed to have taken place in its history, constituting four grand eras; and to point out some less obvious manifestations of the poetical principle. The stages assigned to the progress of poetry are as follow:

I. The period of Pastoral and Descriptive Poetry; which allowed a digression upon home, and the introduction of a descriptive lyric.

II. The period of Martial Poetry. At the close of this division are some remarks on our want of a national song, and an attempt is made to enliven the poem by introducing a lyric which deals in martial images and language, although written only for an occasional purpose.

III. The Epic or Historic period of Poetry. Under this division of the subject, the supposed necessity of

an American *Iliad* was naturally enough touched upon.

IV. The period of Dramatic Poetry, or that which analyses, and traces from their origin, the passions excited by certain combinations of circumstances. As this seemed the highest reach of poetical art, so it constitutes the last of my supposed epochs.

The remarks contained in the last division relate to some of the different forms in which poetry has manifested itself, and to a pseudo-poetical race of invalids, whose melancholic notions are due, much oftener than is supposed, to the existence of pulmonary disease, frequently attributed to the morbid state of mind of which it is principally the cause. The allusions introduced at the close will carry their own explanation to all for whom they were intended. I have thus given a general analysis of a poem, which, being written for public delivery, required more variety than is commonly demanded in metrical essays.

The shorter pieces are arranged mainly with reference to the dignity of their subjects. A few remarks with regard to a species of writing in which the author has occasionally indulged, are offered to the consider-

ation of those who are disposed to criticise rigorously; without the intention, however, of justifying all or any of the attempts at comic poetry, if they are bad specimens of their kind.

The *extravagant* is often condemned as unnatural; as if a tendency of the mind, shown in all ages and forms, had not its foundation in nature. A series of hyperbolical images is considered beneath criticism by the same judges who would write treatises upon the sculptured satyrs and painted arabesques of antiquity, which are only hyperbole in stone and colours. As material objects in different lights repeat themselves in shadows variously elongated, contracted, or exaggerated, so our solid and sober thoughts caricature themselves in fantastic shapes inseparable from their originals, and having a unity in their extravagance, which proves them to have retained their proportions in certain respects, however differing in outline from their prototypes. To illustrate this by an example. Our idea of a certain great nation, an idea founded in substantial notions of its geography, its statistics, its history, in one aspect of the mind stretches into the sublime in the image of *Britannia*, and in another dilates into the sub-ridiculous in the person of *John*

Bull. Both these personifications partially represent their object; both are useful and philosophical. And I am not afraid to say to the declaimers upon dignity of composition, that a metrical arabesque of a storm or a summer, if its images, though hyperbolical, are conceivable, and consistent with each other, is a perfectly healthy and natural exercise of the imagination, and not, as some might think, a voluntary degradation of its office. I argue, as I said before, for a principle, and not for my own attempt at its illustration.

I had the intention of pointing out some accidental plagiarisms, or coincidences, as they might be more mildly called, discovered principally by myself after the composition of the passages where they occur; but as they are, so far as I know, both innocent and insignificant, and as I have sometimes had literary pickpockets at my own skirts, I will leave them, like the apples of Atalanta, as an encouragement to sagacious critics, should any such follow my footsteps.

I have come before the public like an actor who returns to fold his robes and make his bow to the audience. Already engaged in other duties, it has been with some effort that I have found time to adjust my own mantle; and I now willingly retire to

more quiet labours, which, if less exciting, are more certain to be acknowledged as useful and received with gratitude ; thankful that, not having staked all my hopes upon a single throw, I can sleep quietly after closing the last leaf of my little volume.

O. W. H.

Boston, Massachusetts,
November 1, 1836.

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MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

Oliver Wendell Holmes is a son of the late Rev. Abiel Holmes, D.D., and was born at Cambridge, in Massachusetts, on the twenty-ninth day of August, 1809. He received his early education at the Phillips Exeter Academy, and entered Harvard University in 1825. On being graduated he commenced the study of the law, but relinquished it after one year's application, for the more congenial pursuit of medicine, to which he devoted himself with much ardour and industry. For the more successful prosecution of his studies, he visited Europe in the spring of 1833, passing the principal portion of his residence abroad at Paris, where he attended the hospitals, acquired an intimate knowledge of the language, and became per-

sonally acquainted with many of the most eminent physicians of France.

He returned to Boston near the close of the year 1835, and in the following spring commenced the practice of medicine in that city. In the autumn of the same year he delivered a poem before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Harvard University, which was received with extraordinary and well-merited applause. In 1838 he was elected Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in the medical institution connected with Dartmouth College; but, on being married, two years afterward, he resigned that office, and has since devoted himself entirely to the duties of his profession.

The earlier poems of Doctor Holmes appeared in "The Collegian."* They were little less distin-

* "The Collegian" was a monthly miscellany published in 1830, by the undergraduates at Cambridge. Among the editors were Holmes, the late William H. Simmons, who will long be remembered for his admirable lectures on the great poets and orators of England, and John O. Sargent, who distinguished himself as an able political writer in the long contest which resulted in the election of General Harrison to the presidency, and is now engaged in the successful practice of the law in the city of New York.

guished for correct and melodious versification than his more recent and most elaborate compositions. They attracted attention by their humour and originality, and were widely circulated and republished in contemporary periodicals. But a small portion of them have been printed under his proper signature.

In 1831 a small volume appeared in Boston, entitled "Illustrations of the Athenæum Gallery of Paintings," and composed of metrical pieces, chiefly satirical, written by Doctor Holmes and Epes Sargent. It embraced many of our author's best humorous verses, afterward included in the edition of his acknowledged works. His principal production, "Poetry, a Metrical Essay," was delivered before a literary society at Cambridge. It is in the heroic measure, and in its versification it is not surpassed by any poem written in this country.

For several years the attention of Doctor Holmes, as I have before remarked, has been devoted to his professional business. He has obtained two or three prizes for dissertations on medical questions, and as a

physician and as a lecturer on physiological subjects, he has become eminently popular in the city in which he resides. As a poet he has won an enduring reputation. He possesses a rich vein of humour, with learning and originality, and great skill as an artist.

POETRY:

A METRICAL ESSAY.

TO

CHARLES WENTWORTH UPHAM,

THE FOLLOWING

METRICAL ESSAY

IS

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

POETRY;

A METRICAL ESSAY.

SCENES of my youth![1] awake its slumbering fire!
Ye winds of Memory, sweep the silent lyre!
Ray of the past, if yet thou canst appear,
Break through the clouds of Fancy's waning year;
Furl from her breast the thin autumnal snow,
If leaf or blossom still is fresh below!

Long have I wandered; the returning tide
Brought back an exile to his cradle's side;
And as my bark her time-worn flag unrolled,
To greet the land-breeze with its faded fold,
So, in remembrance of my boyhood's time,
I lift these ensigns of neglected rhyme;—
O more than blest, that, all my wanderings through,
My anchor falls where first my pennons flew!

THE morning light, which rains its quivering beams
Wide o'er the plains, the summits, and the streams,
In one broad blaze expands its golden glow
On all that answers to its glance below;
Yet, changed on earth, each far reflected ray
Braids with fresh hues the shining brow of day;
Now, clothed in blushes by the painted flowers,
Tracks on their cheeks the rosy-fingered hours;
Now, lost in shades, whose dark, entangled leaves
Drip at the noontide from their pendent eaves,
Fades into gloom, or gleams in light again
From every dew-drop on the jewelled plain.

We, like the leaf, the summit, or the wave,
Reflect the light our common nature gave,
But every sunbeam, falling from her throne,
Wears, on our hearts some colouring of our own;
Chilled in the slave, and burning in the free,
Like the sealed cavern by the sparkling sea;
Lost, like the lightning in the sullen clod,
Or shedding radiance, like the smiles of God;
Pure, pale in Virtue, as the star above,
Or quivering roseate on the leaves of Love;
Glaring like noontide, where it glows upon
Ambition's sands,—the desert in the sun;
Or soft suffusing o'er the varied scene
Life's common coloring,—intellectual green.

Thus Heaven, repeating its material plan,
Arched over all the rainbow mind of man.
But he, who, blind to universal laws,
Sees but effects, unconscious of their cause,—
Believes each image in itself is bright,
Not robed in drapery of reflected light,—
Is like the rustic, who, amidst his toil,
Has found some crystal in his meagre soil,
And, lost in rapture, thinks for him alone
Earth worked her wonders on the sparkling stone,
Nor dreams that Nature, with as nice a line,
Carved countless angles through the boundless mine.

Thus err the many, who, entranced to find
Unwonted lustre in some clearer mind,
Believe that Genius sets the laws at nought
Which chain the pinions of our wildest thought;
Untaught to measure, with the eye of art,
The wandering fancy or the wayward heart;
Who match the little only with the less,
And gaze in rapture at its slight excess,
Proud of a pebble, as the brightest gem
Whose light might crown an emperor's diadem.

And, most of all, the pure ethereal fire,
Which seems to radiate from the poet's lyre,

Is to the world a mystery and a charm,
An Ægis wielded on a mortal's arm,
While Reason turns her dazzled eye away,
And bows her sceptre to her subject's sway ;
And thus the poet, clothed with godlike state,
Usurped his Maker's title—to create ;
He, whose thoughts differing not in shape, but dress,
What others feel, more fitly can express,
Sits like the maniac on his fancied throne,
Peeps through the bars, and calls the world his own.

There breathes no being but has some pretence
To that fine instinct called poetic sense ;
The rudest savage, roaming through the wild,
The simplest rustic, bending o'er his child,
The infant, listening to the warbling bird,
The mother, smiling at its half-formed word ;
The boy uncaged, who tracks the fields at large,
The girl, turned matron to her babe-like charge ;
The freeman, casting with unpurchased hand
The vote that shakes the turrets of the land ;
The slave, who, slumbering on his rusted chain,
Dreams of the palm-trees on his burning plain ;
The hot-cheeked reveller, tossing down the wine,
To join the chorus pealing " Auld lang syne ; "
The gentle maid, whose azure eye grows dim,
While Heaven is listening to her evening hymn ;

The jewelled beauty, when her steps draw near
The circling dance and dazzling chandelier ;
E'en trembling age, when spring's renewing air
Waves the thin ringlets of his silvered hair ;—
All, all are glowing with the inward flame,
Whose wider halo wreathes the poet's name,
While, unembalmed, the silent dreamer dies,
His memory passing with his smiles and sighs !

If glorious visions, born for all mankind,
The bright auroras of our twilight mind ;
If fancies, varying as the shapes that lie
Stained on the windows of the sunset sky ;
If hopes, that beckon with delusive gleams,
Till the eye dances in the void of dreams ;
If passions, following with the winds that urge
Earth's wildest wanderer to her farthest verge ;
If these on all some transient hours bestow
Of rapture tingling with its hectic glow,
Then all are poets ; and if earth had rolled
Her myriad centuries, and her doom were told,
Each moaning billow of her shoreless wave,
Would wail its requiem o'er a poet's grave !

If to embody in a breathing word
Tones that the spirit trembled when it heard ;

To fix the image all unveiled and warm,
And carve in language its ethereal form,
So pure, so perfect, that the lines express
No meagre shrinking, no unlaced excess;
To feel that art, in living truth, has taught
Ourselves, reflected in the sculptured thought;—
If this alone bestows the right to claim
The deathless garland and the sacred name;
Then none are poets, save the saints on high,
Whose harps can murmur all that words deny!

But, though to none is granted to reveal,
In perfect semblance, all that each may feel,
As withered flowers recall forgotten love,
So, warmed to life, our faded passions move
In every line, where kindling fancy throws
The gleam of pleasures, or the shade of woes.

When, schooled by time, the stately queen of art
Had smoothed the pathways leading to the heart,
Assumed her measured tread, her solemn tone,
And round her courts the clouds of fable thrown,
The wreaths of Heaven descended on her shrine,
And wondering earth proclaimed the Muse divine.
Yet, if her votaries had but dared profane
The mystic symbols of her sacred reign,

How had they smiled beneath the veil to find
What slender threads can chain the mighty mind!

Poets, like painters, their machinery claim,
And verse bestows the varnish and the frame;
Our grating English, whose Teutonic jar
Shakes the racked axle of Art's rattling car,
Fits like mosaic in the lines that gird
Fast in its place each many-angled word;
From Saxon lips Anacreon's numbers glide,
As once they melted on the Teian tide,
And, fresh transfused, the Iliad thrills again
From Albion's cliffs as o'er Achaia's plain!
The proud heroic, with its pulse-like beat,
Rings like the cymbals clashing as they meet;
The sweet Spenserian, gathering as it flows,
Sweeps gently onward to its dying close,
Where waves on waves in long succession pour,
Till the ninth billow melts along the shore;
The lonely spirit of the mournful lay,
Which lives immortal as the verse of Gray,
In sable plumage slowly drifts along,
On eagle pinion, through the air of song;
The glittering lyric bounds elastic by,
With flashing ringlets and exulting eye,
While every image, in her airy whirl,
Gleams like a diamond on a dancing girl![2]

Born with mankind, with man's expanded range
And varying fates the poet's numbers change ;
Thus in his history may we hope to find
Some clearer epochs of the poet's mind,
As from the cradle of its birth we trace,
Slow wandering forth, the patriarchal race.

I.

When the green earth, beneath the zephyr's wing,
Wears on her breast the varnished buds of Spring ;
When the loosed current, as its folds uncoil,
Slides in the channels of the mellowed soil ;
When the young hyacinth returns to seek
The air and sunshine with her emerald beak ;
When the light snowdrops, starting from their cells,
Hang each pagoda with its silver bells ;
When the frail willow twines her trailing bow
With pallid leaves that sweep the soil below ;
When the broad elm, sole empress of the plain,
Whose circling shadow speaks a century's reign,
Wreaths in the clouds her regal diadem,—
A forest waving on a single stem ;—
Then mark the poet ; though to him unknown
The quaint-mouthed titles, such as scholars own,
See how his eye in ecstasy pursues
The steps of Nature tracked in radiant hues ;

Nay, in thyself, whate'er may be thy fate,
Pallid with toil, or surfeited with state,
Mark how thy fancies, with the vernal rose,
Awake, all sweetness, from their long repose;
Then turn to ponder o'er the classic page,
Traced with the idyls of a greener age,
And learn the instinct which arose to warm
Art's earliest essay, and her simplest form.

To themes like these her narrow path confined
The first-born impulse moving in the mind;
In vales unshaken by the trumpet's sound,
Where peaceful Labor tills his fertile ground,
The silent changes of the rolling years,
Marked on the soil, or dialled on the spheres,
The crested forests and the coloured flowers,
The dewy grottoes and the blushing bowers,
These, and their guardians, who, with liquid names,
Strephons and Chloes, melt in mutual flames,
Woo the young Muses from their mountain shade,
To make Arcadias in the lonely glade.

Nor did they visit only with their smiles
The fabled valleys and Elysian isles;
He who is wearied of his village plain,
May roam the Edens of the world in vain.

'Tis not the star-crowned cliff, the cataract's flow,
The softer foliage, or the greener glow,
The lake of sapphire, or the spar-hung cave,
The brighter sunset, or the broader wave,
Can warm his heart whom every wind has blown
To every shore, forgetful of his own.

Home of our childhood! how affection clings
And hovers round thee with her seraph wings!
Dearer thy hills, though clad in autumn brown,
Than fairest summits which the cedars crown!
Sweeter the fragrance of thy summer breeze,
Than all Arabia breathes along the seas!
The stranger's gale wafts home the exile's sigh,
For the heart's temple is its own blue sky!

O happiest they, whose early love unchanged,
Hopes undissolved, and friendship unestranged,
Tired of their wanderings, still can deign to see
Love, hopes, and friendship, centering all in thee!

And thou, my village! as again I tread
Amidst thy living, and above thy dead;
Though some fair playmates guard with chaster fears
Their cheeks, grown holy with the lapse of years;
Though with the dust some reverend locks may blend,
Where life's last mile-stone marks the journey's end;

On every bud the changing year recalls,
The brightening glance of morning memory falls,
Still following onward as the months unclose
The balmy lilac or the bridal rose;
And still shall follow, till they sink once more
Beneath the snow-drifts of the frozen shore,
As when my bark, long tossing in the gale,
Furled in her port her tempest-rended sail!

What shall I give thee? Can a simple lay,
Flung on thy bosom like a girl's bouquet,
Do more than deck thee for an idle hour,
Then fall unheeded, fading like the flower?
Yet, when I trod, with footsteps wild and free,
The crackling leaves beneath yon linden-tree,
Panting from play, or dripping from the stream,
How bright the visions of my boyish dream!
Or, modest Charles, along thy broken edge,
Black with soft ooze and fringed with arrowy sedge,
As once I wandered in the morning sun,
With reeking sandal and superfluous gun;
How oft, as Fancy whispered in the gale,
Thou wast the Avon of her flattering tale!
Ye hills, whose foliage, fretted on the skies,
Prints shadowy arches on their evening dyes,
How should my song, with holiest charm, invest
Each dark ravine and forest-lifting crest!

How clothe in beauty each familiar scene,
Till all was classic on my native green!

As the drained fountain, filled with autumn leaves,
The field swept naked of its garnered sheaves;
So wastes at noon the promise of our dawn,
The springs all choking, and the harvest gone.

Yet hear the lay of one whose natal star
Still seemed the brightest when it shone afar;
Whose cheek, grown pallid with ungracious toil,
Glows in the welcome of his parent soil;
And ask no garlands sought beyond the tide,
But take the leaflets gathered at your side.

Our ancient church! its lowly tower,
Beneath the loftier spire,
Is shadowed when the sunset hour
Clothes the tall shaft in fire;
It sinks beyond the distant eye,
Long ere the glittering vane,
High wheeling in the western sky,
Has faded o'er the plain.

Like Sentinel and Nun, they keep
Their vigil on the green;
One seems to guard, and one to weep,
The dead that lie between;
And both roll out, so full and near,
Their music's mingling waves,
They shake the grass, whose pennoned spear,
Leans on the narrow graves.

The stranger parts the flaunting weeds,
Whose seeds the winds have strown
So thick beneath the line he reads,
They shade the sculptured stone;
The child unveils his clustered brow,
And ponders for a while
The graven willow's pendent bough,
Or rudest cherub's smile.

But what to them the dirge, the knell?
These were the mourner's share;—
The sullen clang, whose heavy swell
Throbbed through the beating air;—
The rattling cord,—the rolling stone,—
The shelving sand that slid,
And, far beneath, with hollow tone
Rung on the coffin's lid.

The slumberer's mound grows fresh and green,
Then slowly disappears ;
The mosses creep, the gray stones lean,
Earth hides his date and years ;
But long before the once-loved name
Is sunk or worn away,
No lip the silent dust may claim,
That pressed the breathing clay.

Go where the ancient pathway guides,
See where our sires laid down
Their smiling babes, their cherished brides,
The patriarchs of the town ;
Hast thou a tear for buried love ?
A sigh for transient power ?
All that a century left above,
Go, read it in an hour !

The Indian's shaft, the Briton's ball,
The sabre's thirsting edge,
The hot shell, shattering in its fall,
The bayonet's rending wedge,—
Here scattered death ; yet seek the spot,
No trace thine eye can see,
No altar,—and they need it not
Who leave their children free !

Look where the turbid rain-drops stand
In many a chiselled square,
The knightly crest, the shield, the brand
Of honoured names were there ;—
Alas ! for every tear is dried
Those blazoned tablets knew,
Save when the icy marble's side
Drips with the evening dew.

Or gaze upon yon pillared stone,[3]
The empty urn of pride ;
There stands the Goblet and the Sun,—
What need of more beside ?
Where lives the memory of the dead,
Who made their tomb a toy ?
Whose ashes press that nameless bed ?
Go, ask the village boy !

Lean o'er the slender western wall,
Ye ever-roaming girls ;
The breath that bids the blossom fall
May lift your floating curls,
To sweep the simple lines that tell
An exile's date and doom ;—
And sigh, for where his daughters dwell,
They wreathe the stranger's tomb.

And one amid these shades was born,
Beneath this turf who lies
Once beaming as the summer's morn,
That closed her gentle eyes ;—
If sinless angels love as we,
Who stood thy grave beside,
Three seraph welcomes waited thee,
The daughter, sister, bride !

I wandered to thy buried mound,
When earth was hid, below
The level of the glaring ground,
Choked to its gates with snow,
And when with summer's flowery waves
The lake of verdure rolled,
As if a Sultan's white-robed slaves
Had scattered pearls and gold.

Nay, the soft pinions of the air,
That lift this trembling tone,
Its breath of love may almost bear,
To kiss thy funeral stone ;—
And, now thy smiles have passed away,
For all the joy they gave,
May sweetest dews and warmest ray
Lie on thine early grave !

When damps beneath, and storms above,
Have bowed these fragile towers,
Still o'er the graves yon locust-grove
Shall swing its orient flowers ;—
And I would ask no mouldering bust,
If e'er this humble line,
Which breathed a sigh o'er other's dust,
Might call a tear on mine.

II.

But times were changed ; the torch of terror came
To light the summits with the beacon's flame ;
The streams ran crimson, the tall mountain pines
Rose a new forest o'er embattled lines ;
The bloodless sickle lent the warrior's steel,
The harvest bowed beneath his chariot wheel ;
Where late the wood-dove sheltered her repose,
The raven waited for the conflict's close ;
The cuirassed sentry walked his sleepless round
Where Daphne smiled or Amaryllis frowned ;
Where timid minstrels sung their blushing charms,
Some wild Tyrtæus called aloud, " To arms !"

When Glory wakes, when fiery spirits leap,
Roused by their accents from her tranquil sleep,

The ray that flashes from the soldier's crest,
Lights, as it glances, in the poet's breast;—
Not in pale dreamers, whose fantastic lay
Toys with smooth trifles like a child at play,
But men, who act the passions they inspire,
Who wave the sabre as they sweep the lyre!

Ye mild enthusiasts, whose pacific frowns
Are lost like dew-drops caught in burning towns,
Pluck as ye will the radiant plumes of fame,
Break Cæsar's bust to make yourselves a name;
But, if your country bares the avenger's blade
For wrongs unpunished, or for debts unpaid,
When the roused nation bids her armies form,
And screams her eagle through the gathering storm;
When from your ports the bannered frigate rides,
Her black bows scowling to the crested tides,
Your hour has past; in vain your feeble cry,
As the babe's wailings to the thundering sky!

Scourge of mankind! with all the dread array
That wraps in wrath thy desolating way,
As the wild tempest wakes the slumbering sea,
Thou only teachest all that man can be!
Alike thy tocsin has the power to charm
The toil-knit sinews of the rustic's arm,

Or swell the pulses in the poet's veins,
And bid the nations tremble at his strains.

The city slept beneath the moonbeam's glance,
Her white walls gleaming through the vines of France,
And all was hushed, save where the footsteps fell,
On some high tower, of midnight sentinel.
But one still watched ; no self-encircled woes
Chased from his lids the angel of repose ;
He watched, he wept, for thoughts of bitter years
Bowed his dark lashes, wet with burning tears ;
His country's sufferings and her children's shame
Streamed o'er his memory like a forest's flame,
Each treasured insult, each remembered wrong,
Rolled through his heart, and kindled into song ;
His taper faded ; and the morning gales
Swept through the world the war-song of Marseilles ![4]

Now, while around the smiles of Peace expand,
And Plenty's wreaths festoon the laughing land ;
While France ships outward her reluctant ore,
And half our navy basks upon the shore ;
From ruder themes our meek-eyed Muses turn
To crown with roses their enamelled urn.
If e'er again return those awful days
Whose clouds were crimsoned with the beacon's blaze,

Whose grass was trampled by the soldier's heel,
Whose tides were reddened round the rushing keel,
God grant some lyre may wake a nobler strain
To rend the silence of our tented plain!
When Gallia's flag its triple fold displays,
Her marshalled legions peal the Marseillaise;
When round the German close the war-clouds dim,
Far through their shadows floats his battle-hymn;
When, crowned with joy, the camps of England ring,
A thousand voices shout, "God save the King!"—
When victory follows with our eagle's glance,
Our nation's anthem is a country dance![5]

Some prouder muse, when comes the hour at last,
May shake our hill-sides with her bugle-blast;
Not ours the task; but since the lyric dress
Relieves the statelier with its sprightliness,
Hear an old song, which some, perchance, have seen
In stale gazette, or cobwebbed magazine.
There was an hour when patriots dared profane
The mast that Britain strove to bow in vain;[6]
And one, who listened to the tale of shame,
Whose heart still answered to that sacred name,
Whose eye still followed o'er his country's tides
Thy glorious flag, our brave Old Ironsides!
From yon lone attic, on a summer's morn,
Thus mocked the spoilers with his school-boy scorn.

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down !
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky ;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar ;—
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more !

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood
Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood
And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee ;—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea!

O better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave ;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave ;
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
Set every thread-bare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,—
The lightning and the gale !

III.

When florid Peace resumed her golden reign,
And arts revived, and valleys bloomed again;
While War still panted on his broken blade,
Once more the Muse her heavenly wing essayed.
Rude was the song; some ballad, stern and wild,
Lulled the light slumbers of the soldier's child;
Or young romancer, with his threatening glance
And fearful fables of his bloodless lance,
Scared the soft fancy of the clinging girls,
Whose snowy fingers smoothed his raven curls.
But when long years the stately form had bent,
And faithless memory her illusions lent,
So vast the outlines of Tradition grew,
That History wondered at the shapes she drew,
And veiled at length their too ambitious hues
Beneath the pinions of the Epic Muse.

Far swept her wing; for stormier days had brought
With darker passions deeper tides of thought.
The camp's harsh tumult and the conflict's glow,
The thrill of triumph and the gasp of woe,
The tender parting and the glad return,
The festal banquet and the funeral urn,—
And all the drama which at once uprears
Its spectral shadows through the clash of spears,

From camp and field to echoing verse transferred,
Swelled the proud song that listening nations heard.

Why floats the amaranth in eternal bloom
O'er Ilium's turrets and Achilles' tomb ?
Why lingers fancy, where the sunbeams smile
On Circe's gardens and Calypso's isle ?
Why follows memory to the gate of Troy
Her plumed defender and his trembling boy ?
Lo the blind dreamer, kneeling on the sand,
To trace these records with his doubtful hand ;
In fabled tones his own emotion flows,
And other lips repeat his silent woes ;
In Hector's infant see the babes that shun
Those deathlike eyes, unconscious of the sun,
Or in his hero hear himself implore,
" Give me to see, and Ajax asks no more ! "

Thus live undying through the lapse of time
The solemn legends of the warrior's clime ;
Like Egypt's pyramid, or Pæstum's fane,
They stand the heralds of the voiceless plain ;
Yet not like them, for Time, by slow degrees,
Saps the gray stone, and wears the chiselled frieze,
And Isis sleeps beneath her subject Nile,
And crumbled Neptune strews his Dorian pile ;

But Art's fair fabric, strengthening as it rears
Its laurelled columns through the mist of years,
As the blue arches of the bending skies
Still gird the torrent, following as it flies,
Spreads, with the surges bearing on mankind,
Its starred pavilion o'er the tides of mind!

In vain the patriot asks some lofty lay
To dress in state our wars of yesterday.
The classic days, those mothers of romance,
That roused a nation for a woman's glance;
The age of mystery with its hoarded power,
That girt the tyrant in his storied tower,
Have past and faded like a dream of youth,
And riper eras ask for history's truth.

On other shores, above their mouldering towns,
In sullen pomp the tall cathedral frowns,
Pride in its aisles, and paupers at the door,
Which feeds the beggars whom it fleeced of yore.
Simple and frail, our lowly temples throw
Their slender shadows on the paths below;
Scarce steal the winds, that sweep his woodland tracks,
The larch's perfume from the settler's axe,
Ere, like a vision of the morning air,
His slight-framed steeple marks the house of prayer;

Its planks all reeking, and its paint undried,
Its rafters sprouting on the shady side,
It sheds the raindrops from its shingled eaves,
Ere its green brothers once have changed their leaves.

Yet Faith's pure hymn, beneath its shelter rude,
Breathes out as sweetly to the tangled wood,
As where the rays through blazing oriels pour
On marble shaft and tessellated floor ;—
Heaven asks no surplice round the heart that feels,
And all is holy where devotion kneels.

Thus on the soil the patriot's knee should bend,
Which holds the dust once living to defend ;
Where'er the hireling shrinks before the free,
Each pass becomes "a new Thermopylæ ! "
Where'er the battles of the brave are won,
There every mountain "looks on Marathon ! "

Our fathers live ! they guard in glory still
The grass-grown bastions of the fortressed hill ;
Still ring the echoes of the trampled gorge,
With *God and Freedom ! England and Saint George !*
The royal cipher on the captured gun
Mocks the sharp night-dews and the blistering sun ;
The red-cross banner shades its captor's bust,
Its folds still loaded with the conflict's dust ;

The drum, suspended by its tattered marge,
Once rolled and rattled to the Hessian's charge;
The stars have floated from Britannia's mast,
The red coat's trumpet blown the rebel's blast.

Point to the summits where the brave have bled,
Where every village claims its glorious dead;
Say, when their bosoms met the bayonet's shock,
Their only corslet was the rustic frock;
Say, when they mustered to the gathering horn,
The titled chieftain curled his lip in scorn,
Yet, when their leader bade his lines advance,
No musket wavered in the lion's glance;
Say, when they fainted in the forced retreat,
They track the snow-drifts with their bleeding feet,
Yet still their banners, tossing in the blast,
Bore *Ever Ready*,[7] faithful to the last,
Through storm and battle, till they waved again
On Yorktown's hills and Saratoga's plain!

Then, if so fierce the insatiate patriot's flame,
Truth looks too pale, and history seems too tame,
Bid him await some new Columbiad's page,
To gild the tablets of an iron age,
And save his tears, which yet may fall upon
Some fabled field, some fancied Washington!

IV.

But once again, from their Æolian cave,
The winds of Genius wandered on the wave.
Tired of the scenes the timid pencil drew,
Sick of the notes the sounding clarion blew;
Sated with heroes who had worn so long
The shadowy plumage of historic song;
The new-born poet left the beaten course,
To track the passions to their living source.

Then rose the Drama;—and the world admired
Her varied page with deeper thought inspired;
Bound to no clime, for Passion's throb is one
In Greenland's twilight or in India's sun;
Born for no age,—for all the thoughts that roll
In the dark vortex of the stormy soul,
Unchained in song, no freezing years can tame;
God gave them birth, and man is still the same.

So full on life her magic mirror shone,
Her sister Arts paid tribute to her throne;
One reared her temple, one her canvass warmed,
And Music thrilled, while Eloquence informed.

The weary rustic left his stinted task
For smiles and tears, the dagger and the mask;
The sage, turned scholar, half forgot his lore,
To be the woman he despised before;
O'er sense and thought she threw her golden chain,
And Time, the anarch, spares her deathless reign.

Thus lives Medea, in our tamer age,
As when her buskin pressed the Grecian stage;
Not in the cells where frigid learning delves
In Aldine folios mouldering on their shelves;
But breathing, burning in the glittering throng,
Whose thousand bravos roll untired along,
Circling and spreading through the gilded halls,
From London's galleries to San Carlo's walls!

Thus shall he live whose more than mortal name
Mocks with its ray the pallid torch of Fame;
So proudly lifted, that it seems afar
No earthly Pharos, but a heavenly star;
Who, unconfined to Art's diurnal bound,
Girds her whole zodiac in his flaming round,
And leads the passions, like the orb that guides,
From pole to pole, the palpitating tides!

V.

Though round the Muse the robe of song is thrown,
Think not the poet lives in verse alone.
Long ere the chisel of the sculptor taught
The lifeless stone to mock the living thought;
Long ere the painter bade the canvass glow
With every line the forms of beauty know;
Long ere the Iris of the Muses threw
On every leaf its own celestial hue;
In fable's dress the breath of genius poured,
And warmed the shapes that later times adored.

Untaught by Science how to forge the keys,
That loose the gates of Nature's mysteries;
Unschooled by Faith, who, with her angel tread,
Leads through the labyrinth with a single thread,
His fancy, hovering round her guarded tower,
Rained through its bars like Danae's golden shower.

He spoke; the sea-nymph answered from her cave:
He called; the naiad left her mountain wave:
He dreamed of beauty; lo, amidst his dream,
Narcissus mirrored in the breathless stream;
And night's chaste empress, in her bridal play,
Laughed through the foliage where Endymion lay;

And ocean dimpled, as the languid swell
Kissed the red lip of Cytherea's shell:
Of power,—Bellona swept the crimson field,
And blue-eyed Pallas shook her Gorgon shield;
O'er the hushed waves their mightier monarch drove,
And Ida trembled to the tread of Jove!

So every grace, that plastic language knows,
To nameless poets its perfection owes.
The rough-hewn words to simplest thoughts confined
Were cut and polished in their nicer mind;
Caught on their edge, imagination's ray
Splits into rainbows, shooting far away;—
From sense to soul, from soul to sense it flies,
And through all nature links analogies;—
He who reads right will rarely look upon
A better poet than his lexicon!

There is a race, which cold, ungenial skies
Breed from decay, as fungous growths arise;
Though dying fast, yet springing fast again,
Which still usurps an unsubstantial reign.
With frames too languid for the charms of sense,
And minds worn down with action too intense;
Tired of a world whose joys they never knew,
Themselves deceived, yet thinking all untrue;

Scarce men without, and less than girls within,
Sick of their life before its cares begin ;—
The dull disease, which drains their feeble hearts,
To life's decay some hectic thrills imparts,
And lends a force, which, like the maniac's power,
Pays with blank years the frenzy of an hour.

And this is Genius ! Say, does Heaven degrade
The manly frame, for health, for action made ?
Break down the sinews, rack the brow with pains,
Blanch the bright cheek, and drain the purple veins,
To clothe the mind with more extended sway,
Thus faintly struggling in degenerate clay ?

No ! gentle maid, too ready to admire,
Though false its notes, the pale enthusiast's lyre ;
If this be genius, though its bitter springs
Glowed like the morn beneath Aurora's wings,
Seek not the source whose sullen bosom feeds
But fruitless flowers, and dark, envenomed weeds.

But, if so bright the dear illusion seems,
Thou wouldst be partner of thy poet's dreams,
And hang in rapture on his bloodless charms,
Or die, like Raphael, in his angel arms ;
Go, and enjoy thy blessed lot,—to share
In Cowper's gloom, or Chatterton's despair !

Not such were they, whom, wandering o'er the waves
I looked to meet, but only found their graves;
If friendship's smile, the better part of fame,
Should lend my song the only wreath I claim,
Whose voice would greet me with a sweeter tone,
Whose living hand more kindly press my own,
Than theirs,—could Memory, as her silent tread
Prints the pale flowers that blossom o'er the dead,
Those breathless lips, now closed in peace, restore,
Or wake those pulses hushed to beat no more?

Thou, calm, chaste scholar![8] I can see thee now,
The first young laurels on thy pallid brow,
O'er thy slight figure floating lightly down
In graceful folds the academic gown,
On thy curled lip the classic lines, that taught
How nice the mind that sculptured them with thought,
And triumph glistening in the clear blue eye,
Too bright to live,—but oh, too fair to die!

And thou, dear friend,[9] whom Science still deplores,
And love still mourns, on ocean-severed shores,
Though the bleak forest twice has bowed with snow,
Since thou wast laid its budding leaves below,
Thine image mingles with my closing strain,
As when we wandered by the turbid Seine,

Both blest with hopes, which revelled, bright and free,
On all we longed, or all we dreamed to be ;
To thee the amaranth and the cypress fell,—
And I was spared to breathe this last farewell !

But lived there one in unremembered days,
Or lives there still, who spurns the poet's bays ?
Whose fingers, dewy from Castalia's springs,
Rest on the lyre, yet scorn to touch the strings ?
Who shakes the senate with the silver tone
The groves of Pindus might have sighed to own ?
Have such e'er been ? Remember Canning's name !
Do such still live ? Let " Alaric's Dirge " proclaim !

Immortal Art ! where'er the rounded sky
Bends o'er the cradle where thy children lie,
Their home is earth, their herald every tongue
Whose accents echo to the voice that sung.
One leap of Ocean scatters on the sand
The quarried bulwarks of the loosening land ;
One thrill of earth dissolves a century's toil,
Strewed like the leaves that vanish in the soil ;
One hill o'erflows, and cities sink below,
Their marbles splintering in the lava's glow
But one sweet tone, scarce whispered to the air,
From shore to shore the blasts of ages bear ;

One humble name, which oft, perchance, has borne
The tyrant's mockery and the courtier's scorn,
Towers o'er the dust of earth's forgotten graves,
As once, emerging through the waste of waves,
The rocky Titan, round whose shattered spear
Coiled the last whirlpool of the drowning sphere!

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 1.

"Scenes of my Youth."

This poem was commenced a few months subsequently to the author's return to his native village, after an absence of nearly three years.

Note 2. Page 7.

A few lines, perhaps deficient in dignity, were introduced at this point, in delivering the poem, and are appended in this clandestine manner for the gratification of some of my audience.

How many a stanza, blushing like the rose,
Would turn to fustian if resolved to prose!
How many an epic, like a gilded crown,
If some cold critic dared to melt it down,
Roll in his crucible a shapeless mass,
A grain of gold-leaf to a pound of brass!
Shorn of their plumes, our moonstruck sonneteers
Would seem but jackdaws croaking to the spheres;
Our gay Lotharios, with their Byron curls,
Would pine like oysters cheated of their pearls!

Wo to the spectres of Parnassus' shade,
If truth should mingle in the masquerade.
Lo, as the songster's pale creations pass,
Off come at once the "Dearest" and "Alas!"
Crack go the lines and levers used to prop
Top-heavy thoughts, and down at once they drop.
Flowers weep for *hours; Love,* shrieking for his *dove,*
Finds not the solace that he seeks—above.
Fast in the mire, through which in happier time
He ambled dryshod on the stilts of rhyme,
The prostrate poet finds at length a tongue
To curse in prose the thankless stars he sung.

And though, perchance, the haughty muse it shames,
How deep the magic of harmonious names!
How sure the story of romance to please,
Whose rounded stanza ends with Heloise
How rich and full our intonations ride
"On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side!"
But were her name some vulgar "proper noun,"
And Pambamarca changed to Belchertown,
She might be pilloried for her doubtful fame,
And no enthusiast would arise to blame;
And he who outraged the poetic sense,
Might find a home at Belchertown's expense!

The harmless boys, scarce knowing right from wrong,
Who libel others and themselves in song,
When their first pothooks of poetic rage
Slant down the corners of an album's page,
(Where crippled couplets spread their sprawling charms,
As half-taught swimmers move their legs and arms,)
Will talk of "Hesper on the brow of eve,"
And call their cousins "lovely Genevieve;"—

While thus transformed, each dear deluded maid,
Pleased with herself in novel grace arrayed,
Smiles on the Paris who has come to crown
This newborn Helen in a gingham gown!

Note 3. Page 15.

"*Or gaze upon yon pillared stone.*"

The tomb of the Vassall family is marked by a freestone tablet, supported by five pillars, and bearing nothing but the sculptured reliefs of the Goblet and the Sun,—*Vas-Sol*,—which designated a powerful family, now almost forgotten.

The exile referred to in the next stanza was a native of Honfleur in Normandy.

Note 4. Page 19.

"*Swept through the world the war-song of Marseilles.*"

The music and words of the Marseilles Hymn were composed in one night.

Note 5. Page 20.

"*Our nation's anthem is a country dance!*"

The popular air of "Yankee Doodle," like the dagger of Hudibras, serves a pacific as well as a martial purpose.

Note 6. Page 20.

"*The mast that Britain strove to bow in vain.*"

The lyric which follows was printed in the "Boston Daily Advertiser," at the time when it was proposed to break up the frigate Constitution as unfit for service.

Note 7. Page 26.

"*Bore* Ever Ready, *faithful to the last.*"

"*Semper paratus*,"—a motto of the revolutionary standards.

Note 8. Page 32.

"*Thou calm, chaste scholar.*"

Charles Chauncy Emerson; died May 9th, 1836.

Note 9. Page 32.

"*And thou, dear friend.*"

James Jackson, jr., M.D.; died March 29th, 1834.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE LAST READER.

I SOMETIMES sit beneath a tree,
And read my own sweet songs ;
Though nought they may to others be,
Each humble line prolongs
A tone that might have passed away,
But for that scarce remembered lay.

I keep them like a lock or leaf,
That some dear girl has given ;
Frail record of an hour, as brief
As sunset clouds in heaven,
But spreading purple twilight still
High over memory's shadowed hill.

They lie upon my pathway bleak,
Those flowers that once ran wild,
As on a father's care-worn cheek
The ringlets of his child ;
The golden mingling with the gray,
And stealing half its snows away.

What care I though the dust is spread
Around these yellow leaves,
Or o'er them his sarcastic thread
Oblivion's insect weaves ;
Though weeds are tangled on the stream,
It still reflects my morning's beam.

And therefore love I such as smile
On these neglected songs,
Nor deem that flattery's needless wile
My opening bosom wrongs ;
For who would trample, at my side,
A few pale buds, my garden's pride ?

It may be that my scanty ore
Long years have washed away,
And where were golden sands before,
Is nought but common clay ;
Still something sparkles in the sun
For Memory to look back upon.

And when my name no more is heard,
My lyre no more is known,
Still let me, like a winter's bird,
In silence and alone,
Fold over them the weary wing
Once flashing through the dews of spring.

Yes, let my fancy fondly wrap
My youth in its decline,
And riot in the rosy lap
Of thoughts that once were mine,
And give the worm my little store
When the last reader reads no more!

OUR YANKEE GIRLS.

Let greener lands and bluer skies,
If such the wide earth shows,
With fairer cheeks and brighter eyes,
Match us the star and rose;
The winds that lift the Georgian's veil
Or wave Circassia's curls,
Waft to their shores the sultan's sail,—
Who buys our Yankee girls?

The gay grisette, whose fingers touch
Love's thousand chords so well;
The dark Italian loving much,
But more than *one* can tell;

And England's fair-haired, blue-eyed dame,
Who binds her brow with pearls ;—
Ye who have seen them, can they shame
Our own sweet Yankee girls ?

And what if court or castle vaunt
Its children loftier born ?—
Who heeds the silken tassel's flaunt
Beside the golden corn ?
They ask not for the courtly toil
Of ribboned knights and earls,
The daughters of the virgin soil,
Our freeborn Yankee girls !

By every hill whose stately pines
Wave their dark arms above
The home where some fair being shines,
To warm the wilds with love,
From barest rock to bleakest shore
Where farthest sail unfurls,
That stars and stripes are streaming o'er,
God bless our Yankee girls !

LA GRISETTE.

Ah Clemence! when I saw thee last
Trip down the Rue de Seine,
And turning, when thy form had past,
I said, "We meet again,"—
I dreamed not in that idle glance
Thy latest image came,
And only left to memory's trance
A shadow and a name.

The few strange words my lips had taught
Thy timid voice to speak,
Their gentler signs, which often brought
Fresh roses to thy cheek,
The trailing of thy long loose hair
Bent o'er my couch of pain,
All, all returned, more sweet, more fair;
O had we met again!

I walked where saint and virgin keep
The vigil lights of Heaven,
I knew that thou hadst woes to weep,
And sins to be forgiven ;
I watched where Genevieve was laid,
I knelt by Mary's shrine,
Beside me low, soft voices prayed ;
Alas ! but where was thine ?

And when the morning sun was bright,
When wind and wave were calm,
And flamed, in thousand-tinted light,
The rose * of Notre Dame,
I wandered through the haunts of men,
From Boulevard to Quai,
Till, frowning o'er Saint Etienne,
The Pantheon's shadow lay.

In vain, in vain ; we meet no more,
Nor dream what fates befall ;
And long upon the stranger's shore
My voice on thee may call,
When years have clothed the line in moss
That tells thy name and days,
And withered, on thy simple cross,
The wreaths of Père-la-Chaise !

* Circular stained windows are called *roses*.

AN EVENING THOUGHT.

WRITTEN AT SEA.

If sometimes in the dark blue eye,
Or in the deep red wine,
Or soothed by gentlest melody,
Still warms this heart of mine,
Yet something colder in the blood,
And calmer in the brain,
Have whispered that my youth's bright flood
Ebbs, not to flow again.

If by Helvetia's azure lake,
Or Arno's yellow stream,
Each star of memory could awake,
As in my first young dream,
I know that when mine eyes shall greet
The hill-sides bleak and bare,
That gird my home, it will not meet
My childhood's sunsets there.

O when love's first, sweet, stolen kiss
Burned on my boyish brow,
Was that young forehead worn as this?
Was that flushed cheek as now?
Were that wild pulse and throbbing heart
Like these, which vainly strive,
In thankless strains of soulless art,
To dream themselves alive?

Alas! the morning dew is gone,
Gone ere the full of day;
Life's iron fetter still is on,
Its wreaths all torn away;
Happy if still some casual hour
Can warm the fading shrine,
Too soon to chill beyond the power
Of love, or song, or wine!

A SOUVENIR.

Yes, lady! I can ne'er forget,
That once in other years we met;
Thy memory may perchance recall
A festal eve, a rose-wreathed hall,
Its tapers' blaze, its mirrors' glance,
Its melting song, its ringing dance;—
Why, in thy dream of virgin joy,
Shouldst thou recall a pallid boy?

Thine eye had other forms to seek,
Why rest upon his bashful cheek?
With other tones thy heart was stirred,
Why waste on him a gentle word?
We parted, lady,—all night long
Thine ear to thrill with dance and song,—
And I—to weep that I was born
A thing thou scarce wouldst deign to scorn.

And, lady! now that years have past,
My bark has reached the shore at last;
The gales that filled her ocean wing,
Have chilled and shrunk thy hasty spring,
And eye to eye, and brow to brow,
I stand before thy presence now;—
Thy lip is smoothed, thy voice is sweet,
Thy warm hand offered when we meet.

Nay, lady! 'tis not now for me
To droop the lid or bend the knee.
I seek thee,—oh thou dost not shun;
I speak,—thou listenest like a nun;
I ask thy smile,—thy lip uncurls,
Too liberal of its flashing pearls;
Thy tears,—thy lashes sink again,—
My Hebe turns to Magdalen!

O changing youth! that evening hour
Looked down on ours,—the bud—the flower;
Thine faded in its virgin soil,
And mine was nursed in tears and toil;
Thy leaves were withering, one by one,
While mine were opening to the sun.
Which now can meet the cold and storm,
With freshest leaf and hardiest form?

Ay, lady! that once haughty glance
Still wanders through the glittering dance,
And asks in vain from others' pride,
The charity thine own denied;
And as thy fickle lips could learn
To smile and praise,—that used to spurn,
So the last offering on thy shrine
Shall be this flattering lay of mine!

"QUI VIVE!"

"Qui vive!" The sentry's musket rings,
The channelled bayonet gleams
High o'er him, like a raven's wings
The broad tri-coloured banner flings
Its shadow, rustling as it swings
Pale in the moonlight beams;
Pass on! while steel-clad sentries keep
Their vigil o'er the monarch's sleep,
Thy bare, unguarded breast
Asks not the unbroken, bristling zone
That girds yon sceptered trembler's throne;—
Pass on, and take thy rest!

"*Qui vive!*" How oft the midnight air
That startling cry has borne!
How oft the evening breeze has fanned
The banner of this haughty land,
O'er mountain snow and desert sand,
Ere yet its folds were torn!
Through Jena's carnage flying red,
Or tossing o'er Marengo's dead,
Or curling on the towers
Where Austria's eagle quivers yet,
And suns the ruffled plumage, wet
With battle's crimson showers!

"*Qui vive!*" And is the sentry's cry,—
The sleepless soldier's hand,—
Are these,—the painted folds that fly
And lift their emblems, printed high
On morning mist and sunset sky,—
The guardians of a land?
No! If the patriot's pulses sleep,
How vain the watch that hirelings keep,—
The idle flag that waves,
When Conquest, with his iron heel,
Treads down the standards and the steel
That belt the soil of slaves!

THE WASP AND THE HORNET.

—•—

The two proud sisters of the sea,
In glory and in doom!—
Well may the eternal waters be
Their broad, unsculptured tomb!
The wind that rings along the wave,
The clear, unshadowed sun,
Are torch and trumpet o'er the brave,
Whose last green wreath is won!

No stranger-hand their banners furled,
No victor's shout they heard;
Unseen, above them ocean curled,
Save by his own pale bird;
The gnashing billows heaved and fell;
Wild shrieked the midnight gale;
Far, far beneath the morning swell,
Were pennon, spar, and sail.

The land of Freedom ! Sea and shore
Are guarded now, as when
Her ebbing waves to victory bore
Fair barks and gallant men ;
O many a ship of prouder name
May wave her starry fold,
Nor trail, with deeper light of fame,
The paths they swept of old !

FROM A BACHELOR'S PRIVATE JOURNAL.

Sweet Mary, I have never breathed
The love it were in vain to name ;
Though round my heart a serpent wreathed,
I smiled, or strove to smile, the same.

Once more the pulse of Nature glows
With faster throb and fresher fire,
While music round her pathway flows,
Like echoes from a hidden lyre.

And is there none with me to share
The glories of the earth and sky?
The eagle through the pathless air
Is followed by one burning eye.

Ah no! the cradled flowers may wake,
Again may flow the frozen sea,
From every cloud a star may break,—
There comes no second spring to me.

Go,—ere the painted toys of youth
Are crushed beneath the tread of years;
Ere visions have been chilled to truth,
And hopes are washed away in tears.

Go,—for I will not bid thee weep,—
Too soon my sorrows will be thine,
And evening's troubled air shall sweep
The incense from the broken shrine.

If Heaven can hear the dying tone
Of chords that soon will cease to thrill,
The prayer that Heaven has heard alone,
May bless thee when these chords are still!

STANZAS.

STRANGE! that one lightly-whispered tone
Is far, far sweeter unto me,
Than all the sounds that kiss the earth,
Or breathe along the sea;
But, lady, when thy voice I greet,
Not heavenly music seems so sweet.

I look upon the fair blue skies,
And nought but empty air I see;
But when I turn me to thine eyes,
It seemeth unto me
Ten thousand angels spread their wings
Within those little azure rings.

The lily hath the softest leaf,
That ever western breeze hath fanned,
But thou shalt have the tender flower,
So I may take thy hand;
That little hand to me doth yield
More joy than all the broidered field.

O lady! there be many things
That seem right fair, below, above;
But sure not one among them all
Is half so sweet as love;—
Let us not pay our vows alone,
But join two altars both in one.

THE PHILOSOPHER TO HIS LOVE.

Dearest, a look is but a ray
Reflected in a certain way;
A word, whatever tone it wear,
Is but a trembling wave of air;
A touch, obedience to a clause
In nature's pure material laws.

The very flowers that bend and meet,
In sweetening others, grow more sweet;
The clouds by day, the stars by night,
Inweave their floating locks of light;
The rainbow, Heaven's own forehead's braid,
Is but the embrace of sun and shade.

How few that love us have we found!
How wide the world that girds them round!
Like mountain streams we meet and part,
Each living in the other's heart,
Our course unknown, our hope to be
Yet mingled in the distant sea.

But Ocean coils and heaves in vain,
Bound in the subtle moonbeam's chain;
And love and hope do but obey
Some cold, capricious planet's ray,
Which lights and leads the tide it charms,
To Death's dark caves and icy arms.

Alas! one narrow line is drawn,
That links our sunset with our dawn;
In mist and shade life's morning rose,
And clouds are round it at its close;
But ah! no twilight beam ascends
To whisper where that evening ends.

Oh! in the hour when I shall feel
Those shadows round my senses steal,
When gentle eyes are weeping o'er
The clay that feels their tears no more,
Then let thy spirit with me be,
Or some sweet angel, likest thee!

L'INCONNUE.

Is thy name Mary, maiden fair ?
Such should, methinks, its music be ;
The sweetest name that mortals bear,
Were best befitting thee ;
And she, to whom it once was given,
Was half of earth and half of heaven.

I hear thy voice, I see thy smile,
I look upon thy folded hair ;
Ah ! while we dream not they beguile,
Our hearts are in the snare ;
And she, who chains a wild bird's wing,
Must start not if her captive sing.

So, lady, take the leaf that falls,
To all but thee unseen, unknown ;
When evening shades thy silent walls,
Then read it all alone ;
In stillness read, in darkness seal,
Forget, despise, but not reveal !

THE STAR AND THE WATER-LILY.

The sun stepped down from his golden throne,
And lay in the silent sea,
And the Lily had folded her satin leaves,
For a sleepy thing was she;
What is the Lily dreaming of?
Why crisp the waters blue?
See, see, she is lifting her varnished lid!
Her white leaves are glistening through!

The Rose is cooling his burning cheek
In the lap of the breathless tide;—
The Lily hath sisters fresh and fair,
That would lie by the Rose's side;
He would love her better than all the rest,
And he would be fond and true;—
But the Lily unfolded her weary lids,
And looked at the sky so blue.

Remember, remember, thou silly one,
How fast will thy summer glide,
And wilt thou wither a virgin pale,
Or flourish a blooming bride ?
" O the Rose is old, and thorny, and cold,
And he lives on earth," said she ;
" But the Star is fair and he lives in the air,
And he shall my bridegroom be."

But what if the stormy cloud should come,
And ruffle the silver sea ?
Would he turn his eye from the distant sky,
To smile on a thing like thee ?
O no, fair Lily, he will not send
One ray from his far-off throne ;
The winds shall blow and the waves shall flow,
And thou wilt be left alone.

There is not a leaf on the mountain top,
Nor a drop of evening dew,
Nor a golden sand on the sparkling shore,
Nor a pearl in the waters blue,
That he has not cheered with his fickle smile,
And warmed with his faithless beam,—
And will he be true to a pallid flower,
That floats on the quiet stream ?

Alas for the Lily! she would not heed,
But turned to the skies afar,
And bared her breast to the trembling ray
That shot from the rising star;
The cloud came over the darkened sky,
And over the waters wide:
She looked in vain through the beating rain,
And sank in the stormy tide.

ILLUSTRATION OF A PICTURE.

"A SPANISH GIRL IN REVERIE."

She twirled the string of golden beads,
That round her neck was hung,—
My grandsire's gift; the good old man
Loved girls when he was young;
And, bending lightly o'er the cord,
And turning half away,
With something like a youthful sigh,
Thus spoke the maiden gray:

" Well, one may trail her silken robe,
And bind her locks with pearls,
And one may wreathe the woodland rose
Among her floating curls ;
And one may tread the dewy grass,
And one the marble floor,
Nor half-hid bosom heave the less,
Nor broidered corset more !

" Some years ago, a dark-eyed girl
Was sitting in the shade,—
There 's something brings her to my mind
In that young dreaming maid,—
And in her hand she held a flower,
A flower, whose speaking hue
Said, in the language of the heart,
'Believe the giver true.'

" And, as she looked upon its leaves,
The maiden made a vow
To wear it when the bridal wreath
Was woven for her brow ;
She watched the flower, as, day by day,
The leaflets curled and died ;
But he who gave it, never came
To claim her for his bride.

"O many a summer's morning glow
Has lent the rose its ray,
And many a winter's drifting snow
Has swept its bloom away;
But she has kept that faithless pledge
To this, her winter hour,
And keeps it still, herself alone,
And wasted like the flower."

Her pale lip quivered, and the light
Gleamed in her moist blue eyes;—
I asked her how she liked the tints
In those Castilian skies?
"She thought them misty,—'twas perhaps
Because she stood too near;"—
She turned away, and, as she turned,
I saw her wipe a tear.

THE DYING SENECA.

He died not as the martyr dies,
Wrapped in his living shroud of flame;
He fell not as the warrior falls,
Gasping upon the field of fame;
A gentler passage to the grave,
The murderer's softened fury gave.

Rome's slaughtered sons and blazing piles
Had tracked the purpled demon's path,
And yet another victim lived
To fill the fiery scroll of wrath;
Could not imperial vengeance spare
His furrowed brow and silver hair?

The field was sown with noble blood,
The harvest reaped in burning tears,
When, rolling up its crimson flood,
Broke the long-gathering tide of years;
His diadem was rent away,
And beggars trampled on his clay.

None wept,—none pitied ;—they who knelt
At morning by the despot's throne,
At evening dashed the laurelled bust,
And spurned the wreaths themselves had strown ;
The shout of triumph echoed wide,
The self-stung reptile writhed and died !

A PORTRAIT.

A STILL, sweet, placid, moonlight face,
And slightly nonchalant,
Which seems to claim a middle place
Between one's love and aunt,
Where childhood's star has left a ray
In woman's sunniest sky,
As morning dew and blushing day
On fruit and blossom lie.

And yet,—and yet I cannot love
Those lovely lines on steel ;
They beam too much of heaven above,
Earth's darker shades to feel ;

Perchance some early weeds of care
Around my heart have grown,
And brows unfurrowed seem not fair,
Because they mock my own.

Alas ! when Eden's gates were sealed,
How oft some sheltered flower
Breathed o'er the wanderers of the field,
Like their own bridal bower ;
Yet, saddened by its loveliness,
And humbled by its pride,
Earth's fairest child they could not bless,
It mocked them when they sighed.

A ROMAN AQUEDUCT.

The sun-browned girl, whose limbs recline
When noon her languid hand has laid
Hot on the green flakes of the pine,
Beneath its narrow disk of shade ;

As, through the flickering noontide glare,
She gazes on the rainbow chain
Of arches, lifting once in air
The rivers of the Roman's plain ;—

Say, does her wandering eye recall
The mountain-current's icy wave,—
Or for the dead one tear let fall,
Whose founts are broken by their grave ?

From stone to stone the ivy weaves
Her braided tracery's winding veil,
And lacing stalks and tangled leaves
Nod heavy in the drowsy gale.

And lightly floats the pendent vine,
That swings beneath her slender bow,
Arch answering arch,—whose rounded line
Seems mirrored in the wreath below.

How patient Nature smiles at Fame!
The weeds, that strewed the victor's way,
Feed on his dust to shroud his name,
Green where his proudest towers decay.

See, through that channel, empty now,
The scanty rain its tribute pours,—
Which cooled the lip and laved the brow
Of conquerers from a hundred shores.

Thus bending o'er the nation's bier,
Whose wants the captive earth supplied,
The dew of Memory's passing tear
Falls on the arches of her pride!

THE

LAST PROPHECY OF CASSANDRA.

—•—

The sun is fading in the skies,
And evening shades are gathering fast;
Fair city, ere that sun shall rise,
Thy night hath come,—thy day is past!

Ye know not,—but the hour is nigh;
Ye will not heed the warning breath;
No vision strikes your clouded eye,
To break the sleep that wakes in death.

Go, age, and let thy withered cheek
Be wet once more with freezing tears;
And bid thy trembling sorrow speak,
In accents of departed years.

Go, child, and pour thy sinless prayer
Before the everlasting throne;
And He, who sits in glory there,
May stoop to hear thy silver tone.

Go, warrior, in thy glittering steel,
And bow thee at the altar's side;
And bid thy frowning gods reveal
The doom their mystic counsels hide.

Go, maiden, in thy flowing veil,
And bare thy brow, and bend thy knee;
When the last hopes of mercy fail,
Thy God may yet remember thee.

Go, as thou didst in happier hours,
And lay thine incense on the shrine;
And greener leaves, and fairer flowers,
Around the sacred image twine.

I saw them rise,—the buried dead,—
From marble tomb and grassy mound;
I heard the spirits' printless tread,
And voices not of earthly sound.

I looked upon the quivering stream,
And its cold wave was bright with flame;
And wild, as from a fearful dream,
The wasted forms of battle came.

Ye will not hear,—ye will not know,—
Ye scorn the maniac's idle song;
Ye care not! but the voice of woe
Shall thunder loud, and echo long.

Blood shall be in your marble halls,
And spears shall glance, and fire shall glow;
Ruin shall sit upon your walls,
But ye shall lie in death below.

Ay, none shall live, to hear the storm
Around their blackened pillars sweep;
To shudder at the reptile's form,
Or scare the wild bird from her sleep.

TO MY COMPANIONS.

MINE ancient chair! thy wide-embracing arms
Have clasped around me even from a boy;
Hadst thou a voice to speak of years gone by,
Thine were a tale of sorrow and of joy,
Of fevered hopes and ill-foreboding fears,
And smiles unseen, and unrecorded tears.

And thou, my table! though unwearied time
Hath set his signet on thine altered brow,
Still can I see thee in thy spotless prime,
And in my memory thou art living now;
Soon must thou slumber with forgotten things,
The peasant's ashes and the dust of kings.

Thou melancholy mug! thy sober brown
Hath something pensive in its evening hue,
Not like the things that please the tasteless clown,
With gaudy streaks of orange and of blue;
And I must love thee, for thou art mine own,
Pressed by my lip, and pressed by mine alone.

My broken mirror! faithless, yet beloved,
Thou who canst smile, and smile alike on all,
Oft do I leave thee, oft again return,
I scorn the siren, but obey the call;
I hate thy falsehood, while I fear thy truth,
But most I love thee, flattering friend of youth.

Primeval carpet! every well-worn thread
Has slowly parted with its virgin dye;
I saw thee fade beneath the ceaseless tread,
Fainter and fainter in mine anxious eye;
So flies the color from the brightest flower,
And heaven's own rainbow lives but for an hour.

I love you all! there radiates from our own,
A soul that lives in every shape we see;
There is a voice, to other ears unknown,
Like echoed music answering to its key.
The dungeoned captive hath a tale to tell,
Of every insect in his lonely cell;
And these poor frailties have a simple tone,
That breathes in accents sweet to me alone.

TO A CAGED LION.

Poor conquered monarch! though that haughty glance
Still speaks thy courage, unsubdued by time,
And in the grandeur of thy sullen tread
Lives the proud spirit of thy burning clime;—
Fettered by things that shudder at thy roar,
Torn from thy pathless wilds to pace this narrow floor!

Thou wast the victor, and all nature shrunk
Before the thunders of thine awful wrath;
The steel-armed hunter viewed thee from afar,
Fearless and trackless in thy lonely path!
The famished tiger closed his flaming eye,
And crouched and panted as thy step went by!

Thou art the vanquished, and insulting man
Bars thy broad bosom as a sparrow's wing;
His nerveless arms thine iron sinews bind,
And lead in chains the desert's fallen king;
Are these the beings that have dared to twine
Their feeble threads around those limbs of thine?

So must it be ; the weaker, wiser race,
That wields the tempest and that rides the sea,
Even in the stillness of thy solitude
Must teach the lesson of its power to thee ;
And thou, the terror of the trembling wild,
Must bow thy savage strength, the mockery of a child !

THE LAST LEAF.

I saw him once before,
As he passed by the door,
And again
The pavement stones resound
As he totters o'er the ground
With his cane.

They say that in his prime,
Ere the pruning-knife of Time
Cut him down,
Not a better man was found
By the Crier on his round
Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,
And he looks at all he meets
Sad and wan,
And he shakes his feeble head,
That it seems as if he said,
"They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

My grandmamma has said,—
Poor old lady, she is dead
Long ago,—
That he had a Roman nose,
And his cheek was like a rose
In the snow.

But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
Like a staff,
And a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
In his laugh.

I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here ;
But the old three-corner'd hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
Are so queer !

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring,—
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling.

TO A BLANK SHEET OF PAPER.

Wan-visaged thing ! thy virgin leaf
To me looks more than deadly pale,
Unknowing what may stain thee yet,—
A poem or a tale.

Who can thy unborn meaning scan?
Can Seer or Sibyl read thee now?
No,—seek to trace the fate of man
Writ on his infant brow.

Love may light on thy snowy cheek,
And shake his Eden-breathing plumes;
Then shalt thou tell how Lelia smiles,
Or Angelina blooms.

Satire may lift his bearded lance,
Forestalling Time's slow-moving scythe,
And, scattered on thy little field,
Disjointed bards may writhe.

Perchance a vision of the night,
Some grizzled spectre, gaunt and thin,
Or sheeted corpse, may stalk along,
Or skeleton may grin!

If it should be in pensive hour
Some sorrow-moving theme I try,
Ah, maiden, how thy tears will fall,
For all I doom to die!

But if in merry mood I touch
Thy leaves, then shall the sight of thee
Sow smiles as thick on rosy lips,
As ripples on the sea.

The Weekly press shall gladly stoop
To bind thee up among its sheaves ;
The Daily steal thy shining ore,
To gild its leaden leaves.

Thou hast no tongue, yet thou canst speak,
Till distant shores shall hear the sound ;
Thou hast no life, yet thou canst breathe
Fresh life on all around.

Thou art the arena of the wise,
The noiseless battle-ground of fame ;
The sky where halos may be wreathed
Around the humblest name.

Take, then, this treasure to thy trust,
To win some idle reader's smile,
Then fade and moulder in the dust,
Or swell some bonfire's crackling pile !

TO AN INSECT.

I LOVE to hear thine earnest voice,
Wherever thou art hid,
Thou testy little dogmatist,
Thou pretty Katydid!
Thou 'mindest me of gentle folks,—
Old gentle folks are they,—
Thou sayst an undisputed thing
In such a solemn way.

Thou art a female, Katydid!
I know it by the trill
That quivers through thy piercing notes,
So petulant and shrill.
I think there is a knot of you
Beneath the hollow tree,—
A knot of spinster Katydids,—
Do Katydids drink tea?

O tell me where did Katy live,
And what did Katy do?
And was she very fair and young,
And yet so wicked, too?
Did Katy love a naughty man,
Or kiss more cheeks than one?
I warrant Katy did no more
Than many a Kate has done.

Dear me! I 'll tell you all about
My fuss with little Jane,
And Ann, with whom I used to walk
So often down the lane,
And all that tore their locks of black,
Or wet their eyes of blue,—
Pray tell me, sweetest Katydid,
What did poor Katy do?

Ah no! the living oak shall crash,
That stood for ages still,
The rock shall rend its mossy base
And thunder down the hill,
Before the little Katydid
Shall add one word, to tell
The mystic story of the maid
Whose name she knows so well.

Peace to the ever-murmuring race!
And when the latest one
Shall fold in death her feeble wings
Beneath the autumn sun,
Then shall she raise her fainting voice
And lift her drooping lid,
And then the child of future years
Shall hear what Katy did.

THE DILEMMA.

Now, by the blessed Paphian queen,
Who heaves the breast of sweet sixteen;
By every name I cut on bark
Before my morning star grew dark;
By Hymen's torch, by Cupid's dart,
By all that thrills the beating heart;
The bright black eye, the melting blue,—
I cannot choose between the two.

I had a vision in my dreams ;—
I saw a row of twenty beams ;
From every beam a rope was hung,
In every rope a lover swung ;
I asked the hue of every eye,
That bade each luckless lover die ;
Ten livid lips said, heavenly blue,
And ten accused the darker hue.

I asked a matron, which she deemed
With fairest light of beauty beamed ;
She answered, some thought both were fair,—
Give her blue eyes and golden hair.
I might have liked her judgment well,
But, as she spoke, she rung the bell,
And all her girls, nor small nor few,
Came marching in,—their eyes were blue.

I asked a maiden ; back she flung
The locks that round her forehead hung,
And turned her eye, a glorious one,
Bright as a diamond in the sun,
On me, until beneath its rays
I felt as if my hair would blaze ;
She liked all eyes but eyes of green ;
She looked at me ; what could she mean ?

Ah! many lids Love lurks between,
Nor heeds the colouring of his screen;
And when his random arrows fly,
The victim falls, but knows not why.
Gaze not upon his shield of jet,
The shaft upon the string is set;
Look not beneath his azure veil,
Though every limb were cased in mail.

Well both might make a martyr break
The chain that bound him to the stake;
And both, with but a single ray,
Can melt our very hearts away;
And both, when balanced, hardly seem
To stir the scales, or rock the beam;
But that is dearest, all the while,
That wears for us the sweetest smile.

MY AUNT.

My aunt! my dear unmarried aunt!
Long years have o'er her flown;
Yet still she strains the aching clasp
That binds her virgin zone;
I know it hurts her,—though she looks
As cheerful as she can;
Her waist is ampler than her life,
For life is but a span.

My aunt, my poor deluded aunt!
Her hair is almost gray;
Why will she train that winter curl
In such a spring-like way?
How can she lay her glasses down,
And say she reads as well,
When, through a double convex lens,
She just makes out to spell?

Her father,—grandpapa! forgive
This erring lip its smiles,—
Vowed she should make the finest girl
Within a hundred miles.
He sent her to a stylish school;
'Twas in her thirteenth June;
And with her, as the rules required,
"Two towels and a spoon."

They braced my aunt against a board,
To make her straight and tall;
They laced her up, they starved her down,
To make her light and small;
They pinched her feet, they singed her hair,
They screwed it up with pins;—
O never mortal suffered more
In penance for her sins.

So, when my precious aunt was done,
My grandsire brought her back;
(By daylight, lest some rabid youth
Might follow on the track;)
"Ah!" said my grandsire, as he shook
Some powder in his pan,
"What could this lovely creature do
Against a desperate man!"

Alas! nor chariot, nor barouche,
Nor bandit cavalcade
Tore from the trembling father's arms
His all-accomplished maid.
For her how happy had it been!
And Heaven had spared to me
To see one sad, ungathered rose
On my ancestral tree.

THE TOADSTOOL.

THERE 's a thing that grows by the fainting flower,
And springs in the shade of the lady's bower;
The lily shrinks, and the rose turns pale,
When they feel its breath in the summer gale,
And the tulip curls its leaves in pride,
And the blue-eyed violet starts aside;
But the lily may flaunt, and the tulip stare,
For what does the honest toadstool care?

She does not glow in a painted vest,
And she never blooms on the maiden's breast;
But she comes, as the saintly sisters do,
In a modest suit of a Quaker hue.
And, when the stars in the evening skies
Are weeping dew from their gentle eyes,
The toad comes out from his hermit cell,
The tale of his faithful love to tell.

O there is light in her lover's glance,
That flies to her heart like a silver lance;
His breeches are made of spotted skin,
His jacket is tight, and his pumps are thin;
In a cloudless night you may hear his song,
As its pensive melody floats along,
And, if you will look by the moonlight fair,
The trembling form of the toad is there.

And he twines his arms round her slender stem,
In the shade of her velvet diadem;
But she turns away in her maiden shame,
And will not breathe on the kindling flame;
He sings at her feet through the livelong night,
And creeps to his cave at the break of light;
And whenever he comes to the air above,
His throat is swelling with baffled love.

THE MEETING OF THE DRYADS.*

It was not many centuries since,
When, gathered on the moonlit green,
Beneath the Tree of Liberty,
A ring of weeping sprites was seen.

The freshman's lamp had long been dim,
The voice of busy day was mute,
And tortured melody had ceased
Her sufferings on the evening flute.

They met not as they once had met,
To laugh o'er many a jocund tale;
But every pulse was beating low,
And every cheek was cold and pale.

* Written after a general pruning of the trees around Harvard College.

There rose a fair but faded one,
Who oft had cheered them with her song;
She waved a mutilated arm,
And silence held the listening throng.

"Sweet friends," the gentle nymph began,
"From opening bud to withering leaf,
One common lot has bound us all,
In every change of joy and grief.

"While all around has felt decay,
We rose in ever-living prime,
With broader shade and fresher green,
Beneath the crumbling step of time.

"When often by our feet has past
Some biped, nature's walking whim,
Say, have we trimmed one awkward shape,
Or lopped away one crooked limb?

"Go on, fair Science; soon to thee
Shall Nature yield her idle boast;
Her vulgar fingers formed a tree,
But thou hast trained it to a post.

"Go paint the birch's silver rind,
And quilt the peach with softer down;
Up with the willow's trailing threads,
Off with the sunflower's radiant crown!

"Go, plant the lily on the shore,
And set the rose among the waves,
And bid the tropic bud unbind
Its silken zone in arctic caves;

"Bring bellows for the panting winds,
Hang up a lantern by the moon,
And give the nightingale a fife,
And lend the eagle a balloon!

"I cannot smile,—the tide of scorn,
That rolled through every bleeding vein,
Comes kindling fiercer as it flows
Back to its burning source again.

"Again in every quivering leaf
That moment's agony I feel,
When limbs, that spurned the northern blast,
Shrunk from the sacrilegious steel.

" A curse upon the wretch who dared
To crop us with his felon saw !
May every fruit his lip shall taste,
Lie like a bullet in his maw.

" In every julep that he drinks,
May gout, and bile, and headache be ;
And when he strives to calm his pain,
May colic mingle with his tea.

" May nightshade cluster round his path,
And thistles shoot, and brambles cling ;
May blistering ivy scorch his veins,
And dog-wood burn, and nettles sting.

" On him may never shadow fall,
When fever racks his throbbing brow,
And his last shilling buy a rope
To hang him on my highest bough ! "

She spoke ;—the morning's herald beam
Sprang from the bosom of the sea,
And every mangled sprite returned
In sadness to her wounded tree.*

* A little poem, on a similar occasion, may be found in the works of Swift, from which, perhaps, the idea was borrowed ; although I was as much surprised as amused to meet with it some time after writing the preceding lines.

THE MYSTERIOUS VISITER.

THERE was a sound of hurrying feet,
A tramp on echoing stairs,
There was a rush along the aisles,—
It was the hour of prayers.

And on, like Ocean's midnight wave,
The current rolled along,
When, suddenly, a stranger form
Was seen amidst the throng.

He was a dark and swarthy man,
That uninvited guest;
A faded coat of bottle green
Was buttoned round his breast.

There was not one among them all
Could say from whence he came;
Nor beardless boy, nor ancient man,
Could tell that stranger's name

All silent as the sheeted dead,
In spite of sneer and frown,
Fast by a gray-haired senior's side
He sat him boldly down.

There was a look of horror flashed
From out the tutor's eyes;
When all around him rose to pray,
The stranger did not rise!

A murmur broke along the crowd,
The prayer was at an end;
With ringing heels and measured tread
A hundred forms descend.

Through sounding aisle, o'er grating stair,
The long procession poured,
Till all were gathered on the seats
Around the Commons board.

That fearful stranger! down he sat,
Unasked, yet undismayed;
And on his lip a rising smile
Of scorn or pleasure played.

He took his hat and hung it up,
With slow but earnest air ;
He stripped his coat from off his back
And placed it on a chair.

Then from his nearest neighbour's side
A knife and plate he drew ;
And, reaching out his hand again,
He took his teacup too.

How fled the sugar from the bowl !
How sunk the azure cream !
They vanished like the shapes that float
Upon a summer's dream.

A long, long draught,—an outstretched hand,—
And crackers, toast, and tea,
They faded from the stranger's touch
Like dew upon the sea.

Then clouds were dark on many a brow,
Fear sat upon their souls,
And, in a bitter agony,
They clasped their buttered rolls,

A whisper trembled through the crowd,—
Who could the stranger be?
And some were silent, for they thought
A cannibal was he.

What if the creature should arise,—
For he was stout and tall,—
And swallow down a sophomore,
Coat, crow's foot, cap, and all!

All sullenly the stranger rose;
They sat in mute despair;
He took his hat from off the peg,
His coat from off the chair.

Four freshmen fainted on the seat,
Six swooned upon the floor;
Yet on the fearful being passed,
And shut the chapel door.

There is full many a starving man,
That walks in bottle green,
But never more that hungry one
In Commons-hall was seen.

Yet often at the sunset hour,
When tolls the evening bell,
The freshman lingers on the steps,
That frightful tale to tell.

THE SPECTRE PIG.

A BALLAD.

It was the stalwart butcher man,
That knit his swarthy brow,
And said the gentle Pig must die,
And sealed it with a vow.

And oh! it was the gentle Pig
Lay stretched upon the ground,
And ah! it was the cruel knife
His little heart that found.

They took him then, those wicked men,
They trailed him all along;
They put a stick between his lips,
And through his heels a thong,

And round and round an oaken beam
A hempen cord they flung,
And, like a mighty pendulum,
All solemnly he swung!

Now say thy prayers, thou sinful man,
And think what thou hast done,
And read thy catechism well,
Thou bloody-minded one;

For if his sprite should walk by night,
It better were for thee,
That thou wert mouldering in the ground,
Or bleaching in the sea.

It was the savage butcher then,
That made a mock of sin,
And swore a very wicked oath,
He did not care a pin.

It was the butcher's youngest son,—
His voice was broke with sighs,
And with his pocket handkerchief
He wiped his little eyes;

All young and ignorant was he,
But innocent and mild,
And, in his soft simplicity,
Out spoke the tender child;—

"O father, father, list to me;
The Pig is deadly sick,
And men have hung him by his heels,
And fed him with a stick."

It was the bloody butcher then,
That laughed as he would die,
Yet did he soothe the sorrowing child,
And bid him not to cry;—

"O Nathan, Nathan, what 's a Pig,
That thou shouldst weep and wail?
Come, bear thee like a butcher's child,
And thou shalt have his tail!"

It was the butcher's daughter then,
So slender and so fair,
That sobbed as if her heart would break,
And tore her yellow hair;

And thus she spoke in thrilling tone,—
Fast fell the tear-drops big;—
"Ah! woe is me! Alas! Alas!
The Pig! The Pig! The Pig!"

Then did her wicked father's lips
Make merry with her woe,
And call her many a naughty name,
Because she whimpered so.

Ye need not weep, ye gentle ones,
In vain your tears are shed,
Ye cannot wash his crimson hand,
Ye cannot soothe the dead.

The bright sun folded on his breast
His robes of rosy flame,
And softly over all the west
The shades of evening came.

He slept, and troops of murdered Pigs
Were busy with his dreams;
Loud rang their wild, unearthly shrieks,
Wide yawned their mortal seams.

The clock struck twelve; the Dead hath heard;
He opened both his eyes,
And sullenly he shook his tail
To lash the feeding flies.

One quiver of the hempen cord,—
One struggle and one bound,—
With stiffened limb and leaden eye,
The Pig was on the ground!

And straight towards the sleeper's house
His fearful way he wended;
And hooting owl, and hovering bat,
On midnight wing attended.

Back flew the bolt, up rose the latch,
And open swung the door,
And little mincing feet were heard
Pat, pat along the floor.

Two hoofs upon the sanded floor,
And two upon the bed;
And they are breathing side by side,
The living and the dead!

"Now wake, now wake, thou butcher-man!
What makes thy cheek so pale?
Take hold! take hold! thou dost not fear
To clasp a spectre's tail?"

Untwisted every winding coil;
The shuddering wretch took hold,
All like an icicle it seemed,
So tapering and so cold.

"Thou com'st with me, thou butcher-man!"—
He strives to loose his grasp,
But, faster than the clinging vine,
Those twining spirals clasp.

And open, open swung the door,
And, fleeter than the wind,
The shadowy spectre swept before,
The butcher trailed behind.

Fast fled the darkness of the night,
And morn rose faint and dim;
They called full loud, they knocked full long,
They did not waken him.

Straight, straight towards that oaken beam
A trampled pathway ran ;
A ghastly shape was swinging there,—
It was the butcher man.

LINES BY A CLERK.

Oh ! I did love her dearly,
And gave her toys and rings,
And I thought she meant sincerely
When she took my pretty things ;
But her heart has grown as icy
As a fountain in the fall,
And her love, that was so spicy,
It did not last at all.

I gave her once a locket,
It was filled with my own hair,
And she put it in her pocket
With very special care.
But a jeweller has got it,—
He offered it to me,
And another that is not it
Around her neck I see.

For my cooings and my billings
I do not now complain,
But my dollars and my shillings
Will never come again.
They were earned with toil and sorrow,
But I never told her that,
And now I have to borrow,
And want another hat.

Think, think, thou cruel Emma,
When thou shalt hear my woe,
And know my sad dilemma,
That thou hast made it so.
See, see my beaver rusty,
Look, look upon this hole,
This coat is dim and dusty;
O let it rend thy soul!

Before the gates of fashion
I daily bent my knee,
But I sought the shrine of passion,
And found my idol,—thee;
Though never love intenser
Had bowed a soul before it,
Thine eye was on the censer,
And not the hand that bore it.

REFLECTIONS OF A PROUD PEDESTRIAN.

I saw the curl of his waving lash,
And the glance of his knowing eye,
And I knew that he thought he was cutting a dash,
As his steed went thundering by.

And he may ride in the rattling gig,
Or flourish the Stanhope gay,
And dream that he looks exceeding big
To the people that walk in the way;

But he shall think, when the night is still,
On the stable-boy's gathering numbers,
And the ghost of many a veteran bill
Shall hover around his slumbers;

The ghastly dun shall worry his sleep,
And constables cluster around him,
And he shall creep from the wood-hole deep
Where their spectre-eyes have found him!

Ay ! gather your reins, and crack your thong,
And bid your steed go faster;
He does not know, as he scrambles along,
That he has a fool for his master ;

And hurry away on your lonely ride,
Nor deign from the mire to save me ;
I will paddle it stoutly at your side
With the tandem that nature gave me !

THE POET'S LOT.

—•—

What is a poet's love ?—
To write a girl a sonnet,
To get a ring, or some such thing,
And fustianize upon it.

What is a poet's fame ?—
Sad hints about his reason,
And sadder praise from garreteers,
To be returned in season.

Where go the poet's lines ?—
Answer, ye evening tapers !
Ye auburn locks, ye golden curls,
Speak from your folded papers !

Child of the ploughshare, smile ;
Boy of the counter, grieve not,
Though muses round thy trundle-bed
Their broidered tissue weave not.

The poet's future holds
No civic wreath above him ;
Nor slated roof, nor varnished chaise,
Nor wife nor child to love him.

Maid of the village inn,
Who workest woe on satin,
(The grass in black, the graves in green,
The epitaph in Latin,)

Trust not to them who say,
In stanzas, they adore thee ;
O, rather sleep in church-yard clay,
With urns and cherubs o'er thee !

DAILY TRIALS.

BY A SENSITIVE MAN.

O THERE are times
When all this fret and tumult that we hear,
Seemeth more stale than to the sexton's ear
His own dull chimes.

Ding dong! ding dong!
The world is in a simmer like a sea
Over a pent volcano,—woe is me
All the day long!

From crib to shroud!
Nurse o'er our cradles screameth lullaby,
And friends in boots tramp round us as we die,
Snuffling aloud.

At morning's call
The small-voiced pug-dog welcomes in the sun,
And flea-bit mongrels, wakening one by one,
Give answer all.

When evening dim
Draws round us, then the lonely caterwaul,
Tart solo, sour duet, and general squall,—
These are our hymn.

Women, with tongues
Like polar needles, ever on the jar,—
Men, plugless word-spouts, whose deep fountains are
Within their lungs.

Children, with drums
Strapped round them by the fond paternal ass,
Peripatetics with a blade of grass
Between their thumbs.

Vagrants, whose arts
Have caged some devil in their mad machine,
Which grinding, squeaks, with husky groans between,
Come out by starts.

Cockneys that kill
Thin horses of a Sunday,—men, with clams,
Hoarse as young bisons roaring for their dams
From hill to hill.

Soldiers, with guns
Making a nuisance of the blessed air ;
Child-crying bellmen ; children in despair
Screeching for buns.

Storms, thunders, waves !
Howl, crash, and bellow till ye get your fill ;
Ye sometimes rest ; men never can be still
But in their graves.

EVENING.

BY A TAILOR.

Day hath put on his jacket, and around
His burning bosom buttoned it with stars.
Here will I lay me on the velvet grass,
That is like padding to earth's meagre ribs,
And hold communion with the things about me.
Ah me! how lovely is the golden braid,
That binds the skirt of night's descending robe!
The thin leaves, quivering on their silken threads,
Do make a music like to rustling satin,
As the light breezes smooth their downy nap.

Ha! what is this that rises to my touch,
So like a cushion? Can it be a cabbage?
It is, it is that deeply injured flower,
Which boys do flout us with;—but yet I love thee,
Thou giant rose, wrapped in a green surtout.
Doubtless in Eden thou didst blush as bright
As these, thy puny brethren; and thy breath
Sweetened the fragrance of her spicy air;

But now thou seemest like a bankrupt beau,
Stripped of his gaudy hues and essences,
And growing portly in his sober garments.

Is that a swan that rides upon the water?
O no, it is that other gentle bird,
Which is the patron of our noble calling.
I well remember, in my early years,
When these young hands first closed upon a goose;
I have a scar upon my thimble finger,
Which chronicles the hour of young ambition.
My father was a tailor, and his father,
And my sire's grandsire, all of them were tailors;
They had an ancient goose,—it was an heir-loom
From some remoter tailor of our race.
It happened I did see it on a time
When none was near, and I did deal with it,
And it did burn me,—oh, most fearfully!

It is a joy to straighten out one's limbs,
And leap elastic from the level counter,
Leaving the petty grievances of earth,
The breaking thread, the din of clashing shears,
And all the needles that do wound the spirit,
For such a pensive hour of soothing silence.
Kind Nature, shuffling in her loose undress,
Lays bare her shady bosom;—I can feel

With all around me;—I can hail the flowers
That sprig earth's mantle,—and yon quiet bird,
That rides the stream, is to me as a brother.
The vulgar know not all the hidden pockets
Where Nature stows away her loveliness.
But this unnatural posture of the legs
Cramps my extended calves, and I must go
Where I can coil them in their wonted fashion.

THE DORCHESTER GIANT.

THERE was a giant in time of old,
A mighty one was he;
He had a wife, but she was a scold,
So he kept her shut in his mammoth fold;
And he had children three.

It happened to be an election day,
And the giants were choosing a king;
The people were not democrats then,
They did not talk of the rights of men,
And all that sort of thing.

Then the giant took his children three
And fastened them in the pen;
The children roared; quoth the giant, "Be still!"
And Dorchester Heights and Milton Hill
Rolled back the sound again.

Then he brought them a pudding stuffed with plums
As big as the State-House dome;
Quoth he, "There 's something for you to eat;
So stop your mouths with your 'lection treat,
And wait till your dad comes home."

So the giant pulled him a chestnut stout,
And whittled the boughs away;
The boys and their mother set up a shout;
Said he, "You 're in, and you can't get out,
Bellow as loud as you may."

Off he went, and he growled a tune
As he strode the fields along;
'Tis said a buffalo fainted away,
And fell as cold as a lump of clay,
When he heard the giant's song.

But whether the story 's true or not,
It is not for me to show;
There 's many a thing that 's twice as queer
In somebody's lectures that we hear,
And those are true, you know.

* * * * *

What are those lone ones doing now,
The wife and the children sad?
O! they are in a terrible rout,
Screaming, and throwing their pudding about,
Acting as they were mad.

They flung it over to Roxbury hills,
They flung it over the plain,
And all over Milton and Dorchester too
Great lumps of pudding the giants threw;
They tumbled as thick as rain.

* * * * *

Giant and mammoth have past away,
For ages have floated by;
The suet is hard as a marrow-bone,
And every plum is turned to a stone,
But there the puddings lie.

And if, some pleasant afternoon,
You 'll ask me out to ride,
The whole of the story I will tell,
And you shall see where the puddings fell,
And pay for the punch beside.

TO
THE PORTRAIT OF "A GENTLEMAN."
IN THE ATHENÆUM GALLERY.

It may be so,—perhaps thou hast
A warm and loving heart;
I will not blame thee for thy face,
Poor devil as thou art.

That thing, thou fondly deem'st a nose,
Unsightly though it be,—
In spite of all the cold world's scorn,
It may be much to thee.

Those eyes,—among thine elder friends
Perhaps they pass for blue ;—
No matter,—if a man can see,
What more have eyes to do ?

Thy mouth,—that fissure in thy face
By something like a chin,—
May be a very useful place
To put thy victual in.

I know thou hast a wife at home,
I know thou hast a child,
By that subdued, domestic smile
Upon thy features mild.

That wife sits fearless by thy side,
That cherub on thy knee ;
They do not shudder at thy looks,
They do not shrink from thee.

Above thy mantel is a hook,—
A portrait once was there ;
It was thine only ornament,—
Alas ! that hook is bare.

She begged thee not to let it go,
  She begged thee all in vain;
She wept,—and breathed a trembling prayer
  To meet it safe again.

It was a bitter sight to see
  That picture torn away;
It was a solemn thought to think
  What all her friends would say!

And often in her calmer hours,
  And in her happy dreams,
Upon its long-deserted hook
  The absent portrait seems.

Thy wretched infant turns his head
  In melancholy wise,
And looks to meet the placid stare
  Of those unbending eyes.

I never saw thee, lovely one,—
  Perchance I never may;
It is not often that we cross
  Such people in our way;

But if we meet in distant years,
Or on some foreign shore,
Sure I can take my Bible oath,
I 've seen that face before.

TO THE PORTRAIT OF "A LADY."

IN THE ATHENÆUM GALLERY.

Well, Miss, I wonder where you live,
I wonder what 's your name,
I wonder how you came to be
In such a stylish frame ;
Perhaps you were a favorite child,
Perhaps an only one ;
Perhaps your friends were not aware
You had your portrait done !

Yet you must be a harmless soul ;
I cannot think that Sin
Would care to throw his loaded dice
With such a stake to win ;

I cannot think you would provoke
The poet's wicked pen,
Or make young women bite their lips,
Or ruin fine young men.

Pray, did you ever hear, my love,
Of boys that go about,
Who, for a very trifling sum,
Will snip one's picture out ?
I 'm not averse to red and white,
But all things have their place,
I think a profile cut in black
Would suit your style of face !

I love sweet features ; I will own
That I should like myself
To see my portrait on a wall,
Or bust upon a shelf ;
But nature sometimes makes one up
Of such sad odds and ends,
It really might be quite as well
Hushed up among one's friends !

THE COMET.

THE Comet! He is on his way,
And singing as he flies;
The whizzing planets shrink before
The spectre of the skies;
Ah! well may regal orbs burn blue,
And satellites turn pale,
Ten million cubic miles of head,
Ten billion leagues of tail!

On, on by whistling spheres of light,
He flashes and he flames;
He turns not to the left nor right,
He asks them not their names;
One spurn from his demoniac heel,—
Away, away they fly,
Where darkness might be bottled up
And sold for "Tyrian dye."

And what would happen to the land,
And how would look the sea,
If in the bearded devil's path
Our earth should chance to be?
Full hot and high the sea would boil,
Full red the forests gleam;
Methought I saw and heard it all
In a dyspeptic dream!

I saw a tutor take his tube
The Comet's course to spy;
I heard a scream,—the gathered rays
Had stewed the tutor's eye;
I saw a fort,—the soldiers all
Were armed with goggles green;
Pop cracked the guns! whiz flew the balls!
Bang went the magazine!

I saw a poet dip a scroll
Each moment in a tub,
I read upon the warping back,
"The dream of Beelzebub";
He could not see his verses burn,
Although his brain was fried,
And ever and anon he bent
To wet them as they dried.

I saw the scalding pitch roll down
The crackling, sweating pines,
And streams of smoke, like water-spouts,
Burst through the rumbling mines;
I asked the firemen why they made
Such noise about the town;
They answered not,—but all the while
The brakes went up and down.

I saw a roasting pullet sit
Upon a baking egg;
I saw a cripple scorch his hand
Extinguishing his leg;
I saw nine geese upon the wing
Towards the frozen pole,
And every mother's gosling fell
Crisped to a crackling coal.

I saw the ox that browsed the grass
Writhe in the blistering rays,
The herbage in his shrinking jaws
Was all a fiery blaze;
I saw huge fishes, boiled to rags,
Bob through the bubbling waves;
I listened, and I heard the dead
All simmering in their graves!

Strange sights! strange sounds! O fearful dream!
Its memory haunts me still,
The steaming sea, the crimson glare,
That wreathed each wooded hill;
Stranger! if through thy reeling brain
Such midnight visions sweep,
Spare, spare, O spare thine evening meal,
And sweet shall be thy sleep!

A NOONTIDE LYRIC.

THE dinner-bell, the dinner-bell
Is ringing loud and clear;
Through hill and plain, through street and lane,
It echoes far and near;
From curtained hall, and whitewashed stall,
Wherever men can hide,
Like bursting waves from ocean caves,
They float upon the tide.

I smell the smell of roasted meat!
I hear the hissing fry!
The beggars know where they can go,
But where, O where shall I?
At twelve o'clock men took my hand,
At two they only stare,
And eye me with a fearful look,
As if I were a bear!

The poet lays his laurels down
And hastens to his greens;
The happy tailor quits his goose,
To riot on his beans;
The weary cobbler snaps his thread,
The printer leaves his pie;
His very devil hath a home,
But what, O what have I?

Methinks I hear an angel voice,
That softly seems to say;
"Pale stranger, all may yet be well,
Then wipe thy tears away;
Erect thy head, and cock thy hat,
And follow me afar,
And thou shalt have a jolly meal
And charge it at the bar."

I hear the voice! I go! I go!
Prepare your meat and wine!
They little heed their future need,
Who pay not when they dine.
Give me to-day the rosy bowl,
Give me one golden dream,—
To-morrow kick away the stool,
And dangle from the beam!

THE BALLAD OF THE OYSTERMAN.

It was a tall young oysterman lived by the river-side,
His shop was just upon the bank, his boat was on the tide;
The daughter of a fisherman, that was so straight and slim,
Lived over on the other bank, right opposite to him.

It was the pensive oysterman that saw a lovely maid,
Upon a moonlight evening, a sitting in the shade;
He saw her wave her handkerchief, as much as if to say,
"I 'm wide awake, young oysterman, and all the folks away."

Then up arose the oysterman, and to himself said he,
"I guess I 'll leave the skiff at home, for fear that folks should see ;
I read it in the story-book, that, for to kiss his dear,
Leander swam the Hellespont,—and I will swim this here."

And he has leaped into the waves, and crossed the shining stream,
And he has clambered up the bank, all in the moonlight gleam ;
O there were kisses sweet as dew, and words as soft as rain,—
But they have heard her father's step, and in he leaps again !

Out spoke the ancient fisherman,—"O what was that, my daughter ? "
"'Twas nothing but a pebble, Sir, I threw into the water ; "
"And what is that, pray tell me, love, that paddles off so fast ? "
"It 's nothing but a porpoise, Sir, that 's been a swimming past."

Out spoke the ancient fisherman,—"Now bring me my harpoon!
I 'll get into my fishing-boat, and fix the fellow soon;"
Down fell that pretty innocent, as falls a snow-white lamb,
Her hair drooped round her pallid cheeks, like sea-weed on a clam.

Alas for those two loving ones! she waked not from her swound,
And he was taken with the cramp, and in the waves was drowned;
But Fate has metamorphosed them in pity of their woe,
And now they keep an oyster-shop for mermaids down below.

THE MUSIC-GRINDERS.

THERE are three ways in which men take
One's money from his purse,
And very hard it is to tell
Which of the three is worse;
But all of them are bad enough
To make a body curse.

You 're riding out some pleasant day,
And counting up your gains;
A fellow jumps from out a bush
And takes your horse's reins,
Another hints some words about
A bullet in your brains.

It 's hard to meet such pressing friends
In such a lonely spot;
It 's very hard to lose your cash,
But harder to be shot;
And so you take your wallet out,
Though you would rather not.

Perhaps you 're going out to dine,—
Some filthy creature begs
You 'll hear about the cannon-ball
That carried off his pegs,
And says it is a dreadful thing
For men to lose their legs.

He tells you of his starving wife,
His children to be fed,
Poor little, lovely innocents,
All clamorous for bread,—
And so you kindly help to put
A bachelor to bed.

You 're sitting on your window-seat
Beneath a cloudless moon;
You hear a sound, that seems to wear
The semblance of a tune,
As if a broken fife should strive
To drown a cracked bassoon.

And nearer, nearer still, the tide
Of music seems to come,
There 's something like a human voice,
And something like a drum;
You sit, in speechless agony,
Until your ear is numb.

Poor "home, sweet home" should seem to be
A very dismal place;
Your "auld acquaintance," all at once,
Is altered in the face;
Their discords sting through Burns and Moore,
Like hedgehogs dressed in lace.

You think they are crusaders, sent
From some infernal clime,
To pluck the eyes of Sentiment,
And dock the tail of Rhyme,
To crack the voice of Melody,
And break the legs of Time.

But hark! the air again is still,
The music all is ground,
And silence, like a poultice, comes
To heal the blows of sound;
It cannot be,—it is,—it is,—
A hat is going round!

No! Pay the dentist when he leaves
A fracture in your jaw,
And pay the owner of the bear,
That stunned you with his paw,
And buy the lobster, that has had
Your knuckles in his claw;

But if you are a portly man,
Put on your fiercest frown,
And talk about a constable
To turn them out of town;
Then close your sentence with an oath,
And shut the window down!

And if you are a slender man,
Not big enough for that,
Or, if you cannot make a speech,
Because you are a flat,
Go very quietly and drop
A button in the hat!

THE TREADMILL SONG.

The stars are rolling in the sky,
The earth rolls on below,
And we can feel the rattling wheel
Revolving as we go.
Then tread away, my gallant boys,
And make the axle fly;
Why should not wheels go round about
Like planets in the sky?

Wake up, wake up, my duck-legged man,
And stir your solid pegs ;
Arouse, arouse, my gawky friend,
And shake your spider legs ;
What though you 're awkward at the trade,
There 's time enough to learn,—
So lean upon the rail, my lad,
And take another turn.

They 've built us up a noble wall,
To keep the vulgar out ;
We 've nothing in the world to do,
But just to walk about ;
So faster, now, you middle men,
And try to beat the ends,—
It 's pleasant work to ramble round
Among one's honest friends.

Here, tread upon the long man's toes,
He shan't be lazy here,—
And punch the little fellow's ribs,
And tweak that lubber's ear,—
He 's lost them both,—don't pull his hair,
Because he wears a scratch,
But poke him in the further eye,
That isn't in the patch.

Hark! fellows, there 's the supper-bell,
And so our work is done ;
It 's pretty sport,—suppose we take
A round or two for fun !
If ever they should turn me out,
When I have better grown,
Now hang me, but I mean to have
A treadmill of my own !

THE SEPTEMBER GALE.

I 'm not a chicken; I have seen
Full many a chill September,
And though I was a youngster then,
That gale I well remember;
The day before, my kite-string snapped,
And, I my kite pursuing,
The wind whisked off my palm-leaf hat;—
For me, two storms were brewing!

It came as quarrels sometimes do,
When married folks get clashing ;
There was a heavy sigh or two,
Before the fire was flashing,—

A little stir among the clouds,
Before they rent asunder,—
A little rocking of the trees,
And then came on the thunder.

Lord! how the ponds and rivers boiled,
And how the shingles rattled!
And oaks were scattered on the ground
As if the Titans battled;
And all above was in a howl,
And all below a clatter,—
The earth was like a frying-pan,
Or some such hissing matter.

It chanced to be our washing-day,
And all our things were drying:
The storm came roaring through the lines,
And set them all a flying;
I saw the shirts and petticoats
Go riding off like witches;
I lost, ah! bitterly I wept,—
I lost my Sunday breeches!

I saw them straddling through the air,
Alas! too late to win them;
I saw them chase the clouds, as if
The devil had been in them;

They were my darlings and my pride,
My boyhood's only riches,—
"Farewell, farewell," I faintly cried,—
"My breeches! O my breeches!"

That night I saw them in my dreams,
How changed from what I knew them!
The dews had steeped their faded threads,
The winds had whistled through them;
I saw the wide and ghastly rents
Where demon claws had torn them;
A hole was in their amplest part,
As if an imp had worn them.

I have had many happy years,
And tailors kind and clever,
But those young pantaloons have gone,
For ever and for ever!
And not till fate has cut the last
Of all my earthly stitches,
This aching heart shall cease to mourn
My loved, my long-lost breeches!

THE HEIGHT OF THE RIDICULOUS.

I WROTE some lines once on a time
In wondrous merry mood,
And thought, as usual, men would say
They were exceeding good.

They were so queer, so very queer,
I laughed as I would die;
Albeit, in the general way,
A sober man am I.

I called my servant, and he came;
How kind it was of him,
To mind a slender man like me,
He of the mighty limb!

"These to the printer," I exclaimed,
And, in my humorous way,
I added (as a trifling jest),
"There 'll be the devil to pay."

He took the paper, and I watched,
And saw him peep within;
At the first line he read, his face
Was all upon the grin.

He read the next; the grin grew broad,
And shot from ear to ear;
He read the third; a chuckling noise
I now began to hear.

The fourth; he broke into a roar;
The fifth; his waistband split;
The sixth; he burst five buttons off,
And tumbled in a fit.

Ten days and nights, with sleepless eye,
I watched that wretched man,
And since, I never dare to write
As funny as I can.

THE HOT SEASON.

The folks, that on the first of May
Wore winter-coats and hose,
Began to say, the first of June,
"Good Lord! how hot it grows."
At last two Fahrenheits blew up,
And killed two children small,
And one barometer shot dead
A tutor with its ball!

Now all day long the locusts sang
Among the leafless trees;
Three new hotels warped inside out,
The pumps could only wheeze;
And ripe old wine, that twenty years
Had cobwebbed o'er in vain,
Came spouting through the rotten corks
Like Joly's best Champagne!

The Worcester locomotives did
Their trip in half an hour ;
The Lowell cars ran forty miles
Before they checked the power ;
Roll brimstone soon became a drug,
And loco-focos fell ;
All asked for ice, but everywhere
Saltpetre was to sell !

Plump men of mornings ordered tights,
But, ere the scorching noons,
Their candle-moulds had grown as loose
As Cossack pantaloons !
The dogs ran mad,—men could not try
If water they would choose ;
A horse fell dead,—he only left
Four red-hot, rusty shoes !

But soon the people could not bear
The slightest hint of fire ;
Allusions to caloric drew
A flood of savage ire ;
The leaves on heat were all torn out
From every book at school,
And many blackguards kicked and caned,
Because they said,—" Keep cool ! "

The gas-light companies were mobbed,
The bakers all were shot,
The penny press began to talk
Of Lynching Doctor Nott;
And all about the warehouse steps
Were angry men in droves,
Crashing and splintering through the doors
To smash the patent stoves!

The abolition men and maids
Were tanned to such a hue,
You scarce could tell them from their friends,
Unless their eyes were blue;
And when I left, society
Had burst its ancient guards,
And Brattle street and Temple Place
Were interchanging cards!

LINES

RECITED AT THE CAMBRIDGE PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY'S DINNER, IN 1844.

I WAS thinking last night, as I sat in the cars,
With the charmingest prospect of cinders and stars,
Next Thursday is—bless me—how queer it will be,
If that cannibal president calls upon me.

There is nothing on earth that he will not devour,
From a tutor in seed to a freshman in flower;
No sage is too gray, and no youth is too green,
And you can't be too plump, though you 're never too lean.

While others enlarge on the boiled and the roast,
He serves a raw clergyman up with a toast,
Or catches some doctor, quite tender and young,
And basely insists on a bit of his tongue.

Poor victim, prepared for his classical spit,
With a stuffing of praise, and a basting of wit,
You may twitch at your collar, and wrinkle your brow,
But you 're up on your legs, and you 're in for it now !

O think of your friends—they are waiting to hear
Those jokes that are thought so remarkably queer;
And all the Jack Horners of metrical buns
Are prying and fingering to pick out the puns.

Those thoughts, which like chickens, will always thrive best
When reared by the heat of the natural nest,
Will perish if hatched from their embryo dream
In the mist and the glow of convivial steam.

O pardon me then, if I meekly retire,
With a very small flash of ethereal fire ;
No rubbing will kindle your Lucifer match,
If the *fiz* does not follow the primitive scratch.

Dear friends, who are listening so sweetly the while,
With your lips double reefed in a snug little smile,—
I leave you two fables, both drawn from the deep,—
The shells you can drop, but the pearls you may keep.

* * * * * *

The fish called the FLOUNDER, perhaps you may know,
Has one side for use and another for show ;
One side for the public, a delicate brown,
And one that is white, which he always keeps down.

A very young flounder, the flattest of flats,
(And they 're none of them thicker than opera hats)
Was speaking more freely than charity taught,
Of a friend and relation that just had been caught.

" My ! what an exposure ! just see what a sight!
I blush for my race—he is showing his white!
Such spinning and wriggling—why what does he wish ?
How painfully small to respectable fish !"

Then said an old SCULPIN,—" My freedom excuse,
But you 're playing the cobbler with holes in your shoes ;
Your brown side is up—but just wait till you 're tried,
And you 'll find that all flounders are white on one side."

* * * * * *

There 's a slice near the PICKEREL's pectoral fins,
Where the *thorax* leaves off and the *venter* begins ;
Which his brother, survivor of fish-hooks and lines,
Though fond of his family never declines.

He loves his relations—he feels they 'll be missed,
But that one little tit-bit he cannot resist ;
So your bait may be swallowed, no matter how fast,
For you catch your next fish with a piece of the last.

And thus, O survivor, whose merciless fate,
Is to take the next hook with the president's bait,
You are caught while you snatch from the end of his line,
The morsel he sent from this bosom of mine !

TERPSICHORE.*

In narrowest girdle, O reluctant Muse,
In closest frock and Cinderella shoes,
Bound to the foot-lights for thy brief display,
One zephyr step, and then dissolve away !

Short is the space that gods and men can spare
To Song's twin brother when she is not there,—
Let others water every lusty line,
As Homer's heroes did their purple wine,

* Read at the Annual Dinner of the P.B.K. Society, at Cambridge, August 24, 1843.

Pierian revellers! know in strains like these
The native juice, the real honest squeeze,—
Strains that, diluted to the twentieth power,
In yon grave temple* might have filled an hour.

Small room for Fancy's many-chorded lyre,
For Wit's bright rockets with their trains of fire,
For Pathos, struggling vainly to surprise
The iron tutor's tear-denying eyes,
For Mirth, whose finger with delusive wile
Turns the grim key of many a rusty smile,
For Satire, emptying his corrosive flood
On hissing Folly's gas-exhaling brood,
The pun, the fun, the moral and the joke,
The hit, the thrust, the pugilistic poke,
Small space for these, so pressed by niggard time,
Like that false matron, known to nursery rhyme—
Insidious Morey—scarce her tale begun
Ere listening infants weep the story done.

O had we room to rip the mighty bags
That Time, the harlequin, has stuffed with rags!
Grant us one moment to unloose the strings,
While the old gray-beard shuts his leather wings.

* The true Annual Poem is always delivered in the neighbouring church.

But what a heap of motley trash appears
Crammed in the bundles of successive years,
As the lost rustic on some festal day
Stares through the concourse in its vast array,—
Where in one cake a throng of faces runs
All stuck together like a sheet of buns,—
And throws the bait of some unheeded name,
Or shoots a wink with most uncertain aim,
So roams my vision, wandering over all,
And strives to choose, but knows not where to fall.

Skins of flayed authors—husks of dead reviews—
The turn-coat's clothes—the office-seeker's shoes—
Scraps from cold feasts, where conversation runs
Through mouldy toasts to oxydated puns ;
And husky songs a listening crowd endures,
Rasped from the throats of bellowing amateurs ;
Sermons, whose writers played such dangerous tricks
Their own heresiarchs called them heretics,
(Strange that one term such distant poles should link,
The Priestleyan's copper and the Puseyan's zinc ;)
Poems that shuffle with superfluous legs
A blindfold minuet over addled eggs,
Where all the syllables that end in éd,
Like old dragoons, have cuts across the head ;
Essays so dark Champollion might despair
To guess what mummy of a thought was there,

Where our poor English, striped with foreign phrase,
Looks like a zebra in a parson's chaise ;
Lectures that cut our dinners down to roots,
Or prove (by monkeys) men should stick to fruits ;
Delusive error—as at trifling charge
Professor Gripes will demonstrate at large—
Mesmeric pamphlets, which to facts appeal,
Each fact as slippery as a fresh caught eel,
And figured heads, whose hieroglyphs invite
To wandering knaves that discount fools at sight ;
Such things as these, with heaps of unpaid bills,
And candy puffs and homœopathic pills,
And ancient bell-crowns with contracted rim,
And bonnets hideous with expanded brim,
And coats whose memory turns the sartor pale,
Their sequels tapering like a lizard's tail ;
How might we spread them to the smiling day
And toss them, fluttering like the new mown hay,
To laughter's light or sorrow's pitying shower,
Were these brief minutes lengthened to an hour.

The narrow moments fit like Sunday shoes,
How vast the heap, how quickly must we choose ;
A few small scraps from out his mountain mass
We snatch in haste, and let the vagrant pass.

This shrunken CRUST that Cerberus could not bite,
Stamped (in one corner) "Pickwick copyright,"
Kneaded by youngsters, raised by flattery's yeast,
Was once a loaf and helped to make a feast.
He for whose sake the glittering show appears
Has sown the world with laughter and with tears,
And they whose welcome wets the bumper's brim
Have wit and wisdom—for they all quote him.
So, many a tongue the evening hour prolongs
With spangled speeches—let alone the songs—
Statesmen grow merry, young attorneys laugh,
And weak teetotals warm to half and half,
And beardless Tulleys, new to festive scenes,
Cut their first crop of youth's precocious greens,
And wits stand ready for impromptu claps,
With loaded barrels and percussion caps,
And Pathos, cantering through the minor keys,
Waves all her onions to the trembling breeze,
While the great Feasted views with silent glee
His scattered limbs in Yankee fricassee.

Sweet is the scene where genial friendship plays
The pleasing game of interchanging praise;
Self-love, grimalkin of the human heart,
Is ever pliant to the master's art;
Soothed with a word, she peacefully withdraws
And sheaths in velvet her obnoxious claws,

And thrills the hand that smooths her glossy fur
With the light tremor of her grateful pur.

But what sad music fills the quiet hall
If on her back a feline rival fall,
And oh, what noises shake the tranquil house
If old Self-interest cheats her of a mouse!

Thou, O my country, hast thy foolish ways,
Too apt to pur at every stranger's praise,
But if the stranger touch thy modes or laws,
Off goes the velvet and out come the claws!
And thou, Illustrious! but too poorly paid
In toasts from Pickwick for thy great crusade,
Though while the echoes laboured with thy name
The public trap denied thy little game,
Let other lips our jealous laws revile—
The marble Talfourd or the rude Carlyle—
But on thy lids, that Heaven forbids to close
Where'er the light of kindly nature glows,
Let not the dollars that a churl denies
Weigh like the shillings on a dead man's eyes!
Or, if thou wilt, be more discreetly blind,
Nor ask to see all wide extremes combined;
Not in our wastes the dainty blossoms smile
That crowd the gardens of thy scanty isle,—

There white-cheek'd luxury weaves a thousand charms,
Here sun-browned labour swings his Cyclop arms,
Long are the furrows he must trace between
The ocean's azure and the prairie's green;
Full many a blank his destined realm displays,
Yet see the promise of his riper days:
Far through yon depths the panting engine moves,
His chariots ringing in their steel-shod grooves;
And Erie's naiad flings her diamond wave
O'er the wild sea-nymph in her distant cave!
While tasks like these employ his anxious hours,
What if his corn-fields are not edged with flowers?
Though bright as silver the meridian beams
Shine through the crystal of thine English streams,
Turbid and dark the mighty wave is whirled
That drains our Andes and divides a world! *

But lo! a PARCHMENT! † surely it would seem
The sculptured impress speaks of power supreme;
Some grave design the solemn page must claim
That shows so broadly an emblazoned name—
A sovereign's promise! Look, the lines afford
All Honor gives when Caution asks his word—

* A recent traveller complained a good deal of the want of transparency in the waters of the Mississippi.

† It is said by mercantile men that this is not the material used for the *State bonds*, supposed to be referred to in this passage.

There sacred Faith has laid her snow-white hands,
And awful Justice knit his iron bands,
Yet every leaf is stained with treachery's dye,
And every letter crusted with a lie.
Alas! no treason has degraded yet
The Arab's salt, the Indian's calumet,
A simple rite that bears the wanderer's pledge,
Blunts the keen shaft and turns the dagger's edge;
While jockeying senates stop to sign and seal,
And freeborn statesmen legislate to steal.
Rise, Europe, tottering with thine Atlas load,
Turn thy proud eye to Freedom's blest abode,
And round her forehead, wreathed with heavenly flame,
Bind the dark garland of her daughter's shame!
Ye ocean clouds that wrap the angry blast,
Coil her stained ensign round its haughty mast,
Or tear the fold that wears so foul a scar,
And drive a bolt through every blackened star!

Once more—once only—we must stop so soon—
What have we here? A GERMAN-SILVER SPOON—
A cheap utensil which we often see
Used by the dabblers in æsthetic tea,
Of slender fabric, somewhat light and thin,
Made of mixed metal, chiefly lead and tin;
The bowl is shallow, and the handle small,
Marked in large letters with the name JEAN PAUL.

Small as it is, its powers are passing strange,
For all who use it show a wondrous change ;
And first, a fact to make the barbers stare,
It beats Macassar for the growth of hair ;
See those small youngsters whose expansive ears
Maternal kindness grazed with frequent shears ;
Each bristling crop a dangling mass becomes,
And all the spoonies turn to Absaloms!
Nor this alone its magic power displays,
It alters strangely all their works and ways,
With uncouth words they tire their tender lungs,
The same bald phrases on their hundred tongues ;
"Ever" "The Ages" in their page appear,
"Alway" the bedlamite is called a "Seer;"
On every leaf the "earnest" sage may scan,
Portentous bore! their "many-sided" man,—
A weak eclectic, groping, vague, and dim,
Whose every angle is a half-starved whim,
Blind as a mole and curious as a lynx,
Who rides a beetle which he calls a "Sphinx."

And O what questions asked in club-foot rhyme
Of Earth the tongueless and the deaf mute time!
Here babbling "Insight" shouts in Nature's ears
His last conundrum on the orbs and spheres;
There Self-inspection sucks its little thumb,
With "Whence am I?" and "Wherefore did I come?"

Deluded infants! will they ever know
Some doubts must darken o'er the world below,
Though all the Platos of the nursery trail
Their "clouds of glory" at the go-cart's tail?
O might they profit by these trivial lines
That rank their author with the "Philistines,"
A stubborn race, that spurning foreign law
Was much belabored with an ass's jaw!

Melodious Laura! * From the sad retreats
That hold thee, smothered with excess of sweets,
Shade of a shadow, spectre of a dream,
Glance thy wan eye across the Stygian stream!
The slip-shod dreamer treads thy fragrant halls,
The sophist's cobwebs hang thy roseate walls,
And o'er the crotchets of thy jingling tunes
The bard of mystery scrawls his crooked "runes."

Yes, thou art gone, with all the tuneful hordes
That candied thoughts in amber-colored words,
And in the precincts of thy late abodes
The clattering verse-wright hammers Orphic odes.

Thou, soft as zephyr, wast content to fly
On the gilt pinions of a balmy sigh;

* The verses of Laura Matilda are still remembered by the readers of the "Rejected Addresses."

He, vast as Phœbus on his burning wheels,
Would stride through ether at Orion's heels ;
Thy emblem, Laura, was a perfume jar,
And thine, young Orpheus, is a pewter star ;
The balance trembles, be its verdict told,
When the new jargon slumbers with the old !

Cease, playful goddess ! From thine airy bound
Drop like a feather softly to the ground ;
This light bolero grows a ticklish dance,
And there is mischief in thy kindling glance.
To-morrow bids thee, with rebuking frown,
Change thy gauze tunic for a home-made gown,
Too blest by fortune, if the passing day
Adorn thy bosom with its frail bouquet,
But oh, still happier if the next forgets
Thy daring steps and dangerous pirouettes.

THE PARTING WORD.

I MUST leave thee, lady sweet!
Months shall waste before we meet,
Winds are fair, and sails are spread,
Anchors leave their ocean bed;
Ere this shining day grow dark,
Skies shall gird my shoreless bark:
Through thy tears, O lady mine,
Read thy lover's parting line.

When the first sad sun shall set,
Thou shalt tear thy locks of jet;
When the morning star shall rise,
Thou shalt wake with weeping eyes;
When the second sun goes down,
Thou more tranquil shalt be grown,
Taught too well that wild despair,
Dims thine eyes, and spoils thine hair.

All the first unquiet week
Thou shalt wear a smileless cheek ;
In the first month's second half
Thou shalt once attempt to laugh ;
Then in Pickwick thou shalt dip,
Slightly puckering round the lip,
'Till at last in sorrow's spite,
Samuel makes thee laugh outright.

While the first seven mornings last,
Bolted in thy chamber fast,
Many a youth shall fume and pout,
" Hang the girl, she 's always out ;"
While the second week goes round,
Vainly shall they ring and pound ;
When the third week shall begin,
" Martha, let the creature in."

Now once more the flattering throng
Round thee flock with smile and song,
But thy lips unweaned as yet,
Lisp, " Oh, how can I forget !
Men and devils, both contrive
Traps for catching girls alive,
Eve was duped, and Helen kissed,
How, oh how can I resist ? "

First be careful of your fan,
Trust it not to youth or man ;
Love has filled a pirate's sail
Often with its perfumed gale.
Mind your 'kerchief most of all,
Fingers touch when 'kerchiefs fall ;
Shorter ells than mercers' clip,
Is the space from hand to lip.

Trust not such as talk in tropes,
Full of pistols, daggers, ropes,
All the hemp that Russia bears
Scarce would answer lover's prayers.
Would you prove them quite sincere,
Tie the rope beneath their ear,
Ask each Romeo if he 'll fall—
Half a pound would hang them all.

Fiercely some shall storm and swear,
Beating breasts in black despair ;
Others murmur with a sigh,
Thou must melt or they will die ;
Painted words on empty lies,
Grubs with wings like butterflies ;
Let them die, and welcome, too,
Pray what better could they do ?

Fare thee well, if you efface
From thy heart love's burning trace,
Keep, oh keep, that hallowed seat
From the tread of vulgar feet ;
If the blue lips of the sea,
Wait with icy kiss for me,
Let not thine forget the vow,
Sealed how often Love, as now !

LINES

RECITED AT THE BERKSHIRE FESTIVAL

Come back to your mother, ye children, for shame,
Who have wandered like truants, for riches or fame !
With a smile on her face, and a sprig in her cap,
She calls you to feast from her bountiful lap.

Come out from your alleys, your courts and your lanes,
And breathe, like young eagles, the air of our plains ;
Take a whiff from our fields, and your excellent wives
Will declare it's all nonsense insuring your lives.

Come you of the law, who can talk if you please,
Till the man in the moon will allow it 's a cheese,
And leave "the old lady, that never tells lies,"
To sleep with her handkerchief over her eyes.

Ye healers of men, for a moment decline
Your feats in the rhubarb and ipecac line;
While you shut up your turnpike, your neighbours can go,
The old roundabout road, to the regions below.

You clerk, on whose ears are a couple of pens,
And whose head is an ant-hill of units and tens;
Though Plato denies you, we welcome you still
As a featherless biped, in spite of your quill.

Poor drudge of the city! how happy he feels
With the burrs on his legs, and the grass at his heels;
No *dodger* behind, his bandannas to share,
No constable grumbling, "You mustn't walk there."

In yonder green meadow, to memory dear,
He slaps a musquetoe and brushes a tear;
The dewdrops hang round him, on blossoms and shoots,
He breathes but one sigh for his youth and his boots.

There stands the old school-house, hard by the old church;
That tree at its side had the flavour of birch;
Oh sweet were the days of his juvenile tricks,
Though the prairie of youth had so many "big licks."

By the side of yon river he weeps and he slumps,
The boots filled with water, as if they were pumps;
Till sated with rapture, he steals to his bed
With a glow in his heart and a cold in his head.

'Tis past—he is dreaming—I see him again;
The ledger returns as by legerdemain;
His neckcloth is damp, with an easterly flaw,
And he holds in his fingers an omnibus straw.

He dreams the shrill gust is a blossomy gale,
That the straw is a rose from his dear native vale;
And murmurs, unconscious of space and of time,
"A 1. Extra-super—Ah, isn't it PRIME!"

Oh what are the prizes we perish to win
To the first little "shiner" we caught with a pin!
No soil upon earth is as dear to our eyes
As the soil we first stirred in terrestrial pies!

Then come from all parties, and parts, to our feast,
Though not at the "Astor," we 'll give you at least
A bite at an apple, a seat on the grass,
And the best of old—water—at nothing a glass.

SONG,

WRITTEN FOR THE ANNIVERSARY DINNER OF THE NEW YORK MERCANTILE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, NOV. 1842; TO WHICH LADIES WERE INVITED.

A HEALTH to dear woman! she bids us untwine
From the cup it encircles the fast-clinging vine;
But her cheek in its crystal with pleasure will glow,
And mirror its bloom in the bright wave below.

A health to sweet woman! the days are no more
When she watched for her lord till the revel was o'er,
And smoothed the white pillow, and blushed when he came
As she pressed her cold lips on his forehead of flame.

Alas for the loved one! too spotless and fair,
The joys of his banquet to chasten and share;
Her eye lost its light that his goblet might shine,
And the rose of her cheek was dissolved in his wine.

Joy smiles in the fountain, health flows in the rills,
As their ribands of silver unwind from the hills ;
They breathe not the mist of the bacchanal's dream,
But the lilies of innocence float on their stream.

Then a health and a welcome to woman once more !
She brings us a passport that laughs at our door ;
It is written on crimson—its letters are pearls—
It is countersigned *Nature*——so, room for the Girls!

DEPARTED DAYS.

Yes, dear departed, cherished days,
Could memory's hand restore
Your morning light, your evening rays,
From Time's gray urn once more,—
Then might this restless heart be still,
This straining eye might close,
And Hope her fainting pinions fold,
While the fair phantoms rose.

But, like a child in ocean's arms,
We strive against the stream,
Each moment farther from the shore
Where life's young fountains gleam—
Each moment fainter wave the fields,—
And wider rolls the sea ;
The mist grows dark—the sun goes down—
Day breaks—and where are we ?

THE STEAMBOAT.

See how yon flaming herald treads
The ridged and rolling waves,
As crashing o'er their crested heads,
She bows her surly slaves!
With foam before and fire behind,
She rends the clinging sea,
That flies before the roaring wind,
Beneath her hissing lee.

The morning spray, like sea-born flowers,
With heaped and glistening bells,
Falls round her fast, in ringing showers,
With every wave that swells;
And flaming o'er the midnight deep,
In lurid fringes thrown,
The living gems of ocean sweep
Along her flashing zone.

With clashing wheel, and lifting keel,
And smoking torch on high,
When winds are loud, and billows reel,
She thunders foaming by!
When seas are silent and serene,
With even beam she glides,
The sunshine glimmering through the green
That skirts her gleaming sides.

Now, like a wild nymph, far apart
She veils her shadowy form,
The beating of her restless heart
Still sounding through the storm;
Now answers, like a courtly dame,
The reddening surges o'er,
With flying scarf of spangled flame,
The Pharos of the shore.

To-night yon pilot shall not sleep,
Who trims his narrowed sail;
To-night yon frigate scarce shall keep
Her broad breast to the gale;
And many a foresail, scoop'd and strain'd,
Shall break from yard and stay,
Before this smoky wreath has stained
The rising mist of day.

Hark! hark! I hear yon whistling shroud,
I see yon quivering mast;
The black throat of the hunted cloud
Is panting forth the blast!
An hour, and whirled like winnowing chaff,
The giant surge shall fling
His tresses o'er yon pennon staff,
White as the sea-bird's wing!

Yet rest, ye wanderers of the deep;
Nor wind nor wave shall tire
Those fleshless arms, whose pulses leap
With floods of living fire;
Sleep on—and when the morning light
Streams o'er the shining bay,
O think of those for whom the night
Shall never wake in day!

SONG,

WRITTEN FOR THE DINNER GIVEN TO CHARLES DICKENS, BY THE YOUNG MEN OF BOSTON, FEB. 1, 1842.

THE stars their early vigils keep,
The silent hours are near,
When drooping eyes forget to weep—
Yet still we linger here.
And what—the passing churl may ask—
Can claim such wond'rous power,
That Toil forgets his wonted task,
And Love his promised hour!

The Irish harp no longer thrills,
Or breathes a fainter tone—
The clarion blast from Scotland's hills,
Alas! no more is blown;
And passion's burning lip bewails
Her Harold's wasted fire,
Still lingering o'er the dust that veils
The Lord of England's lyre.

But grieve not o'er its broken strings,
  Nor think its soul hath died,
While yet the lark at heaven's gate sings,
  As once o'er Avon's side:—
While gently summer sheds her bloom,
  And dewy blossoms wave
Alike o'er Juliet's storied tomb
  And Nelly's nameless grave.

Thou glorious island of the sea!
  Though wide the wasting flood
That parts our distant land from thee,—
  We claim thy generous blood;
Nor o'er thy far horizon springs
  One hallowed star of fame,
But kindles, like an angel's wings,
  Our western skies in flame!

THE ONLY DAUGHTER.

THEY bid me strike the idle strings,
As if my summer days
Had shaken sunbeams from their wings,
To warm my autumn lays;
They bring to me their painted urn,
As if it were not time
To lift my gauntlet and to spurn
The lists of boyish rhyme;
And, were it not that I have still
Some weakness in my heart
That clings around my stronger will,
And pleads for gentler art,
Perchance I had not turned away
The thoughts grown tame with toil,
To cheat this lone and pallid ray,
That wastes the midnight oil.

Alas! with every year I feel
Some roses leave my brow;
Too young for wisdom's tardy seal,
Too old for garlands now;
Yet, while the dewy breath of spring
Steals o'er the tingling air,
And spreads and fans each emerald wing
The forest soon shall wear,
How bright the opening year would seem,
Had I one look like thine,
To meet me when the morning beam
Calls back its cares to mine!
Too long I bear this lonely lot,
That bids my heart run wild
To press the lips that love me not,
To clasp the stranger's child.

How oft, beyond the dashing seas,
Amidst those royal bowers,
Where danced the lilacs in the breeze,
And swung the chestnut flowers,
I wandered like a wearied slave
Whose morning task is done,
To watch the little hands that gave
Their whiteness to the sun;
To revel in the bright young eyes,
Whose lustre sparkled through

The sable fringe of southern skies,
Or gleamed in Saxon blue!
How oft I heard another's name
Called in some truant's tone;
Sweet accents! which I longed to claim,
To learn and lisp my own!

Too soon the gentle hands, that pressed
The ringlets of the child,
Are folded on the faithful breast
Where first he breathed and smiled;
Too soon the clinging arms untwine,
The melting lips forget,
And darkness veils the bridal shrine
Where wreaths and torches met;
And Hope has but a single thread
Of all her woven chain,
Yet, when her parting plumes are spread,
It bids them fold again;
The voice long silenced in the tomb,
The cheek now changed and chill,
Are with us in the breath and bloom
Of one that loves us still.

Sweet image! I have done thee wrong
To claim this destined lay;
The leaf that asked an idle song
Must bear my tears away.

Yet, in thy memory shouldst thou keep
  This else forgotten strain,
Till years have taught thine eyes to weep,
  And flattery's voice is vain ;
O then, thou fledgling of the nest,
  Like the long-wandering dove,
Thy weary heart may faint for rest,
  As mine, on changeless love.
And while these sculptured lines retrace
  The hours now dancing by,
This vision of thy girlish grace
  May cost thee, too, a sigh.

THE END.

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